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Publications

Foster Care: A Discussion Paper



Ontario

Ministry of
Community and
Social Services

Children's
Services
Division

September 1979

ERRATA

Foster Care: A Discussion Paper

On page 25, the quoted monthly foster allowances under Provincial Benefits were increased January 1, 1979 to:

- o \$106 for the 1st child;
- o \$85 for the 2nd child; and
- o \$74 for each additional child.



CA24N
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Dear Friends:

I am pleased to release for public review and comment, Foster Care: A Discussion Paper.

The paper presents a broad overview of trends in foster care. It discusses a range of issues in foster care and is intended to stimulate discussion and to encourage a review of all aspects of foster care.

One of the important issues in foster care is the decreasing numbers of homes available for this service. While it has been known for some time that the supply of foster homes has been decreasing, it is only with the formation of the Children's Services Division that this was seen as a matter of major concern. Since this Ministry now is clearly committed to an approach which encourages the development of community-based, small family-like settings, it is inconsistent to allow the trend toward reduced numbers of foster homes to continue without trying to discover the causes and take corrective action.

Foster Care: A Discussion Paper represents one of the first steps in developing a plan of corrective action. It not only reviews the present situation but also suggests what factors should be considered and what steps should be taken if we wish to reverse the long-term trends and ensure that this community resource is not lost to children in care.

Over the years Children's Aid Societies and Probation and After Care Services have made individual attempts to improve the recruitment and retention of foster homes. This paper suggests that instead of separate, individualized or local efforts that a comprehensive, coordinated, system-wide approach must be adopted. This will involve a long-term commitment and long-term goals as opposed to a crisis management approach within a short-term time frame.

As a discussion document, the paper deals with a number of issues that need resolution - not just the frequently singled out issue of foster care rates. While the issue of foster care rates and how these are determined and revised is a very important matter, the resolution of that question will not by itself guarantee success for our efforts. The Discussion Paper highlights the importance of how foster parents are recruited, selected and supported. The role of foster parents, their relationship with their workers and their agencies, and their involvement in decisions about children in their homes, are all seen as matters of significance and consequence. All of these aspects are seen in this paper as part of the environment that must be considered and possibly changed if we are to successfully reverse the past foster care trends.

I have accepted the proposition that a broad system-wide approach to foster care must be adopted and that no single remedy will be sufficient. Therefore, within this Ministry the position of Foster Program Coordinator has been developed and Mr. R. Glass has been appointed to that position. To assist Mr. Glass, and the Societies, in the proposed review of the foster care program, a foster care specialist will be made available in each region. The plan is that these specialists will come from a major Society within each region, with the respective Societies being reimbursed for the staff costs. This combination recognizes the expertise of Societies in foster care and sets up a shared review and developmental process. It is my expectation that Foster Care: A Discussion Paper will assist in this total process.

Aside from involving himself in a broadly based review of foster care, Mr. Glass will also manage the announced foster care initiatives for 1979-80.

These include such things as:

- o interim rate adjustment and a rate rationalization study
- o staffing for foster care services
- o review of support services for foster parents
- o special foster care project
- o campaign to improve the image of foster care.

In reviewing the paper, you will note that it reviews the literature on the various issues. It also considers currently available statistics as part of the review of the Ontario scene. The present lack of comprehensive statistics becomes very obvious and highlights the fact that additional information will be needed for any overall or more detailed review of foster care.

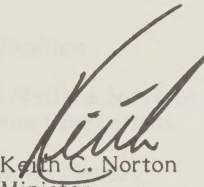
As also noted in the report, only some of the present local practices are described. Since this is a discussion document, it is not intended to be a comprehensive or complete representative description of the variety of present practices. In subsequent stages of the review of foster care it will be useful to complete that picture.

It is my hope that all those concerned with foster care services will carefully consider the conclusions and actions suggested in this report. I trust it will lead to extensive and fruitful discussions by and with foster parents, workers, and managers, as well as professionals outside of Child Welfare or Probation and After Care Services. I think the report should be an especially useful document for discussion groups within the individual Foster Parent Associations.

Comments and observations may be directed to the Consultation Task Force, Children's Services Division, 700 Bay Street, 12th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1E9. Written inquiries about the content of the report and the review of foster care services should be directed to Mr. R. Glass, Foster Program Coordinator, Operational Support, 9th Floor, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1E9.

In closing, I again encourage all those concerned with improving the foster care system to carefully read this paper, reflect upon the issues, and become fully involved in the discussions that are now beginning.

Yours very truly,


Keith C. Norton
Minister
M.P.P. Kingston & the
Islands

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I INTRODUCTION

Why a Program Policy Review at This Time?

There are a variety of reasons for a review at this time of the foster care programs within the Division. Some concerns of a long standing nature, taken together with more recent events make it obvious that a program policy review is urgently needed. Some of the more salient reasons are:

- o the findings of the 1977 research project into the recruitment and retention of foster homes for adolescents and the call for action arising from that research (Foster Homes and Adolescents: A Research Report by Barbara Rosenblum)
- o the continued loss of foster homes, coupled with increasing number of teenagers coming into the care of Children's Aid Societies and the concern about increasing pressure for institutional placements
- o the philosophy that placements should be, wherever appropriate, within family-like settings and the recognition that while foster care is very important for the realization of that philosophy, the continuing decrease in foster homes increasingly frustrates that intent
- o the work on an overall funding approach identified the need for special attention and direction in the foster care area
- o the recognition that the different foster care rates funded by the Division result in competition within the Division and therefore the there is need to develop corrective approaches
- o the prospect of increased financial pressure on budget allocations; the need to ensure that programs, such as foster care, receive an appropriate priority; plus the need to develop strategies that will assist efforts to re-allocate funds from high cost placement resources into effective and lower-cost alternatives such as foster care; and the need to assure at the same time that the quality of care is maintained
- o the provision of a discussion document for the Foster Program Coordinator which will focus discussion and assist in the formulation of a consensus on appropriate action.

II BACKGROUND OVERVIEW OF FOSTER CARE IN ONTARIO

1. PAST BROAD TRENDS IN FOSTER CARE

At the turn of the century, as the use of large institutions fell from favor, foster homes gradually became the preferred placement alternative for orphans and neglected children. The foster homes, like the Societies, were staffed completely voluntarily. Foster homes provided for the child's basic needs and the work and industry expected from the child was considered sufficient preparation for adulthood as a good citizen. It wasn't until the 1930s that attempts were made to select specific foster homes for individual children and foster parents received payment for the cost of the care provided to the foster children.

Foster care as the preferred placement resource wasn't seriously challenged until the advent of group care in the 1960s. One of the arguments frequently made at that time was that group care was more appropriate for teenagers since it did not demand the close adult relationships of the substitute parents in a foster home, nor did it create the same conflict of loyalty for the young person. This argument received more support as the admission of teenagers increased.

Presently, the choice between foster versus group care is again being reconsidered. This is best illustrated by the Options Program in Toronto which found that many teenagers referred there are unable to cope with the peer pressure in a group setting and so special foster placements are being made. Also, they found it is disruptive to group home programs to implement an individualized treatment plan with a one-to-one contract worker.

One other major development in the late 1960s is significant, namely, the development of local foster parent associations, which in turn lead to provincial and national associations. The associations have provided channels for the expression of concerns that otherwise would probably have been repressed or might have become a factor in the decision to discontinue fostering. They have also provided an opportunity for informal support networks to develop. These and other events have improved the self-image of foster parents and encouraged them to seek improvements in the foster care system.

2. MINISTRY POSITION VIS-A-VIS FOSTER CARE (CHILD WELFARE)

Nineteen sixty-five was a watershed year for a number of reasons. Not only did it mark the beginning of guaranteed funding of child welfare services but it also marked a change in attitude toward them. Prior to that time Ministry staff completed detailed reports on Society activities and included quite extensive recommendations to improve services. When the cost of providing those services became a public responsibility, the Ministry moved over time to a more reactive position in which Societies proposed and sought to initiate improvements and the Ministry responded to those initiatives. Through all this, recognition was given to the value of foster care; however, the Ministry lacked any express policy on foster care programming so that in practice, decisions on a number of dimensions could be said to have impinged on the program.

An example is the whole question of foster parent boarding rates. How these should be established, what cost elements should be included and on what basis these rates should be adjusted were questions not addressed by the Ministry. After 1965 it was common to compare rates with neighbouring Societies and to use the rates of lower paying Societies as a means of controlling proposals for higher rates. This was done without consideration of whether Societies were successful or not in recruiting or retaining foster homes.

In 1973, the Halton Children's Aid Society developed a rationale for costing component elements of foster care. It used a variety of indexes or indicators to establish a cost for food, shelter, and incidental expenses. As a result of the "Halton Rates" and support from the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) for uniform provincial payments, the use of neighbouring rates to control foster parent reimbursements was discontinued. More recently attempts to work toward more uniform rates have been made. Consequently provincial averages have been used as a way of identifying which Societies should be encouraged to raise their rates.

In 1975 another standard for fixing foster care rates was accepted, at least as far as the Toronto area was concerned. In that year foster parent rates were allowed a large increase so that they would be more competitive with private home day care rates. That rationale apparently did not receive wide acceptance and has not been used, or at least not successfully, by other Societies. Thus, the basic question of how rates should be set still remains to be settled.

The Ministry's stand on caseload factors has also had considerable impact on the fostering program. In the late '60s and early '70s a little-publicized workload factor was used to respond to Societies' requests for additional staff. Dissatisfaction with this approach was noted by the Urwick-Currie Report and resulted in a major effort to develop a replacement formula using work activity measurements. The approach proved to be inaccurate, complex and time-consuming and so was ultimately abandoned leaving the situation unchanged.

A basic problem with caseload counts as related to fostering, was and is that foster care did not receive any recognition as a case outside of the child in care placed in that home. What this has meant is that recruitment efforts, placement activities by foster home finders, development and training activities with foster parents, support services to foster parent associations, and any use of specialized foster home staff can only be maintained by increasing other caseload ratios. Consequently, it has taken very resolute Societies, especially the smaller or medium sized ones, to maintain any priority for all these necessary foster care servicing activities.

The use of workload factors was relaxed for a time but was applied again in 1977 and 1978. The reapplication of the workload factors based on the 1975 caseloads has been especially problematic. The workload factors ignored too many areas of Societies' activities and pushed Societies to concentrate their efforts on the five types of cases included in the factors: open protection, unmarried parents, child care, adoption and foster home applications. Given the lack of standardized definitions, it rewarded Societies who used very loose criteria in defining applications (e.g., some Societies counted inquiries as fostering applications, while others only accepted applications after interested couples had gone through a group intake) or who opened a protection case at the point of receiving a complaint. Most Societies only counted these as a case after an investigation had been completed. Consequently, the workload factor approach has perpetuated historical discrepancies.

The way Societies report their staffing arrangements on the Monthly Statistical Report adds to the discrepancies. For example, some Societies with contract staff did not show these on their complement and so these extra social workers were not used by the Ministry in calculating the workload ratios for those specific Societies.

The Monthly Statistical Report does not clearly or satisfactorily identify functions. Consequently Societies with volunteer or publicity coordinators may use such positions to help in publicity and recruitment efforts related to foster care. Since these are not social work positions they were not considered in developing the workload ratios and Societies without such positions were penalized.

Aside from policies on rates and staffing to support foster care programming, there is the matter of research initiatives. By the early '70s considerable concern had arisen over the increase in teenagers admitted to care and there was also an ongoing debate as to whether foster care or group care was more appropriate for that age group. The Ministry, with a preference for foster care and in response to Societies' requests, decided in 1972 to mount a province-wide research study on teenagers in foster care. This ambitious project involved all Societies in the development of statistical data over five years as a way of establishing what really was happening with teenagers in the care of Societies. In addition, the research involved in-depth interviews at representative locations in the Northern, Western and Eastern area of the Province. Society representatives, foster parents (both active and retired), representatives from School Boards, Public Health, Police, Family Courts, and Municipalities were all involved in a review and assessment of Societies' placement policies, and in particular, foster care.

Mrs. Nora Fox, a retired local director, was engaged as principal researcher. The data collection and preliminary analysis were completed. In addition, a first rough draft of a report was prepared when Mrs. Fox's contract expired and she left Canada to work on a project in Africa. The Child Welfare Branch subsequently tried on a number of occasions to have the project completed but without success. Not only did this result in a loss of benchmark statistics and related findings, it sidetracked the development of a coherent foster care policy. At the time, it created considerable resentment because Societies were hard-pressed to provide detailed statistics, to monitor activities and in general to make extra efforts to comply with the Ministry's research demands. Finally, it created the unfortunate and inaccurate suspicion that the research was not completed because of its findings and their cost implications.

The other research effort is the Hamilton study reported on by Barbara Rosenblum in *Foster Homes and Adolescents* (1977). This research grew out of an agreement reached in regard to the Hamilton-Wentworth Society's 1973 estimates. The Ministry allowed the Society to pay a special incentive rate to homes caring for two or more teenagers, the Society agreed to research the effectiveness of these rates for the recruitment and retention of foster homes. Subsequently, the Hamilton Catholic Society was also included and received the same incentive rates. (It was agreed at the time that the Societies should, in future, maintain the same rates to avoid negative comparisons and foster parent dissatisfaction. They have maintained the same rates but implement them at different dates.) The monitoring part of the reported research was funded as part of the Child Welfare budget, while an enlarged research project was financed by federal funds.

The monitoring of financial incentives was inconclusive. Despite considerable efforts at recruitment and retention of foster homes, adolescents in foster care were proportionately fewer in 1976 than in 1971. With regard to the enlarged research project, perhaps one brief quotation may serve to summarize its findings:

The major conclusion of the wider research is that primarily, we need to develop a fully articulated and clear-cut legal and policy framework within which foster parents can serve. Many constructive and creative programs have been put into effect for the recruitment and retention of foster parents, but far too many have been lost in cutbacks, staff changes and resources needed elsewhere. We need a permanent, realistic framework for foster parents, so we do not have to waste everyone's time renegotiating and rediscovering solutions to the same problems again and again.

Work and money will be necessary for the development of such a framework, and its implementation as well. More money will clearly be needed to make specific options available but it is money well spent, in all senses. (p. 127)

3. OUTLINE OF THE CURRENT FOSTER CARE SITUATION

The statistical information is such that any attempt to provide an overview of foster care services must be done within the context of the old program branches. That is the course followed in this section, in the rank order in which foster care is used by program areas.

It would have been useful to have compared rates not only among Children's Aid Societies, but also across the various program branches. However, even within Child Welfare there is a great variation not only in rates but also in what those rates cover or do not cover, and a comparison would be misleading. Furthermore, the term "foster home" has been used generically to apply to a variety of services which are not parallel in program or philosophy and which cannot be compared indiscriminately. Traditional foster care is a volunteered service with reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses. For foster group home operators on the other hand, the service is a career. Thus, the issues move from equitable rates (though that aspect needs to be clarified) to the role of compensation in the development of quality foster care. For the purposes of this report, it was decided to discuss rates in the section on compensation rather than in this outline of the current situation.

Foster Care Within the Child Welfare Services

The 1966 statistics are used as a base line to measure subsequent changes since these figures represent the first year that the Societies were, in effect, guaranteed public funding. The statistics used, unless otherwise indicated, come from the Year End Report compiled from monthly statistical reports completed by each Society.

a) Utilization of Foster Homes

TABLE 1
Foster Homes in Use 1966-1978

<u>Year End</u>	<u>Occupied Foster Homes</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>% Change Over 2 Years</u>
1966	7075	0	0
1968	7293	+ 218	+ 3.1%
1970	6930	- 363	- 5.0%
1972	5852	- 1078	- 15.5%
1974	4843	- 1009	- 17.2%
1976	4480	- 363	- 7.5%
1978	4619	+ 139	+ 3.1%

The peak year for the number of foster homes in use was 1968. The cumulative decrease from 1968 to 1978 is 2456 or 34.7 percent. After 1972-1974 the rate of decrease declined sharply and 1978 showed the first gain in a decade. Without developing other indicators, we cannot tell at this stage whether this is the beginning of a new trend. It may be that CASs are putting much more emphasis on and effort into foster care now and that this is beginning to show results, or again, it could turn into a brief plateau. In any case, there needs to be a much greater increase before Societies can hope to exercise any particular choice among foster homes, especially for teenagers.

Throughout the years there were always a number of approved homes which remained vacant and this appears at first to be inconsistent with the declining use of foster homes over the same period.

TABLE 2
Vacant Homes as a Percentage of
Total Inventory of Foster Homes

<u>Year End</u>	<u>Total Inventory</u>	<u>Homes Vacant</u>	<u>Vacant Homes as % of Total</u>
1966	9020	1945	21.6%
1968	9825	2532	25.8%
1970	9288	2358	25.4%
1972	8027	2175	27.1%
1974	6886	2043	29.7%
1976	6423	1943	30.2%
1978	6562	1943	29.6%

At first glance it seems odd that the proportion of vacant homes actually increased although the actual number of foster homes decreased. If the population under age 18 had declined drastically and the demand for foster care had dropped correspondingly, vacant homes would simply represent failure to predict the service need. The Societies' monthly statistics do not shed much light on why such a high percentage of homes are vacant but the field surveys done in the early '70s by the Child Welfare Branch provide more specific information. The 1973 field survey found that 11 percent of the vacancies were in the category of homes approved for children over 12; 89 percent of the vacant homes had been approved for children under 12. In three out of five cases, the reason for vacancy was that an appropriate child was not available for the home.

It appears then, that Societies were carrying a large inventory of homes for younger children whereas the placement pressure was for homes for teenagers. This situation is probably still true today when it is hard to find foster parents interested in taking on a teenager who may have even more problems than the average adolescent. It should be noted, however, that an inventory of vacant homes is a desirable situation. It gives the worker a choice and enables him or her to match the child with an appropriate home rather than having to take the only home available.

Table 3 below shows just how much the placement pressure for homes for children age 13 and over has increased since 1966.

TABLE 3
Children in Care by Age

1966-1978					
Year	Total Children	Children 12 and Under (%)		Children 13+ (%)	
1966	16,487	12,361	(75%)	4,126	(25%)
1968	18,229	13,026	(72%)	5,203	(28%)
1970	17,807	11,921	(67%)	5,886	(33%)
1972	15,110	9,166	(61%)	5,944	(39%)
1974	13,718	7,330	(53%)	6,388	(47%)
1976	12,962	6,539	(51%)	6,423	(49%)
1978	13,814	6,701	(48%)	7,113	(51%)

Since 1966, the actual number of children in care in the child welfare system has dropped by 2,673 or 16.2 percent. The actual number of children 12 and under in care has dropped 5,660 or 45.8 percent. In contrast, the actual number of adolescents in care has dramatically risen by 2,987 or 72.4 percent. The proportion of children in care age 12 and under and those 13 and over is now roughly equal, whereas 12 years ago, 75 percent of children in care were the younger group. Are these trends parallel to or explainable by demographic trends?

TABLE 4
Age Trends in the Population Age 0-18

1966-1978					
Census Year	Total Population	Age 12 and Under	% of Total	Age 13-18	% of Total
1966	2,560,920	1,946,280	76.0%	614,640	24.0%
1971	2,649,765	1,900,680	71.7	749,085	28.3
1976	2,567,695	1,743,340	67.9	824,355	32.1
1978	2,494,414	1,670,495	67.0	823,919	33.0
(TEIGA Projection)					

Looking at general population figures, there are somewhat similar but very muted trends. The population age 0-18 has remained relatively stable since 1966 with a drop of only 2.6 percent compared to the 16.2 percent drop in children in care. The population age 12 and under has declined 14.2 percent compared to a drop of 45.8 percent for that age group in care. The adolescent population has risen 34.1 percent compared to a rate more than double that for adolescents in the care of the child welfare system.

The differences are significant and help to explain current difficulties with the foster care program which has declined almost 35 percent since 1966 in terms of homes in use. Of course these trends represent the overall picture not necessarily reflected by every Society. Across the province though there is obviously less need for foster homes for younger children, while the supply is either not adequate or not appropriate for the increased numbers of teenagers in care. Let us compare the use of foster care to other placements.

TABLE 5
Children, by Types of Placement
1966-1978

Year	Total in Care	Foster Care*	Group Care	All Institutions**
1966	16,487	11,335 (69%)	315 (2%)	1023 (6%)
1968	18,229	11,588 (64%)	470 (3%)	1319 (7%)
1970	17,807	11,207 (63%)	648 (4%)	1675 (9%)
1972	15,110	9,209 (61%)	820 (5%)	1702 (11%)
1974	13,718	7,852 (57%)	882 (6%)	2066 (15%)
1976	12,962	7,433 (57%)	1046 (8%)	2125 (16%)
1978	13,814	7,565 (55%)	1012 (7%)	2694 (19%)

* Foster care and group care are not mutually exclusive by definition; however, it is assumed that Societies maintain consistency over the years in how they report these two.

** Includes what is designated as "group care" operated by Societies and "outside paid institutions" which could include group care purchased from others. It excludes "receiving homes" and "free institutions" such as children's mental health centres. (The totals do not add up to 100 percent as the table also excludes children on adoption placement, in the home of parent, and the category known as "elsewhere".)

Over the years, there has been relatively little change in the combined use of foster care and all institutions as a percentage of children in care: 75 percent in 1966 and 74 percent in 1978. However, the actual number and the percentage of children in foster care have decreased substantially, while the actual number and percentage of children in all institutions have increased substantially - almost in an inverse ratio.

Although the placements are not broken down by age, it seems fair to generalize from the trends indicated by the accumulated statistics, that the client group age 13 and over in care has greatly increased in proportion to the 12 and under (for whatever reasons). This has led to a decrease in foster home placement and an increased use of group homes and institutions.

One attempt to counteract the decrease in suitable foster homes has been the policy, developed in the '70s, of providing for special payments to foster parents for looking after handicapped or difficult children. While the actual payments and the basis for the payments vary greatly, nonetheless almost all Societies now make provisions for such payments. However, the practice appears to be generally limited since the ratio of Special Foster Care to Total Foster Care in 1977 by rank order from 1-8, decreases from .66 to .25, with the rest of the Societies having smaller ratios down to .05.

Varying arrangements are made for specialized board rates. The 1978 OACAS Survey indicated the various approaches taken by 47 Societies. The most common approach appears to relate the rate to the individual needs and/or problems of the child. The specialized rate is most frequently added to the basic or regular board rate. Beyond these few general comments on areas of agreement, the actual amounts vary according to each Society's scheme. (Detailed information on each Society's provisions is provided in the Appendix.)

It is obvious from the reports of individual Societies that the varying utilization of types of care and rates reflects quite different approaches to foster care, specialized foster care, institutional care, and how children are assessed in relation to these streams.

b) Turnover of Foster Homes

Naturally, some turnover of foster homes is to be expected: new applications come in as a reflection of public interest or response to recruitment efforts; current foster parents move or grow old or tired of fostering and homes are closed. A look at the broad trends in these areas can sharpen the perspective on the current status of foster care in the child welfare sector.

While the number of applications received is a reflection of public interest in the foster care program, it should be noted that there is no precise definition of what constitutes an application. The field surveys carried out for a number of years indicated great variations in actual practice so that the numbers must be viewed with some caution.

TABLE 6
Foster Homes in Use and Applications
1966-1978

<u>Year</u>	<u>In Use</u>	<u>Applications</u>	<u>Change in Applications</u>	<u>% Change in Applications</u>
1966	7075	5613	0	0
1968	7293	5262	- 351	- 6.2%
1970	6930	4428	- 834	- 15.8%
1972	5852	2974	- 1454	- 32.8%
1974	4843	3062	+ 88	+ 2.9%
1976	4480	2734	- 328	- 10.7%
1978	4619	3781	+ 1047	+ 38.2%

The changes in number of applications, while showing an overall decrease, have an erratic pattern with increases shown in 1974 and 1978.

With such tentative data it is very difficult to make any conclusions beyond noting the need for clear definitions and further monitoring of public interest as expressed by inquiries and applications.

On the other hand, the data in Table 7 on closures of foster homes are more precise and reveal more about the current state of fostering in the child welfare sector.

TABLE 7
Rate of Closure of Foster Homes

1966-1978

Year	Foster Home Inventory on Hand, Jan. 1	+	New Approvals	=	Inventory Total	Closures	Closures as % of Total
1966	8859		3851		12710	3390	26.7%
1968	9393		3806		13199	3374	25.6%
1970	9561		3078		12639	3351	26.5%
1972	8777		2264		11041	3014	27.3%
1974	7324		2040		9364	2478	26.5%
1976	6868		1824		8692	2269	26.1%
1978	6387		2196		8583	2021	23.5%

From this table it is evident that the rate of closure as a percentage of the total annual inventory of foster homes has remained relatively constant at an average of 26 percent, but that the number of closures exceeded the number of approvals in 1970, 1972, 1974 and 1976. (The result was a net loss for those years of 23.8 percent of inventory.) If closures were compared only to inventory on hand (excluding new approvals) the rate of closure would be 35 percent - but this figure, though often used, exaggerates the rate of loss. However, even the rate of 26 percent or more than one-quarter annually is a serious matter.

Also of interest in this table is the fact that closures, as a percentage of inventory, peaked in 1972 and have since decreased annually. A factor in this may be the decline in infants coming into care and the subsequent gradual reduction of homes approved for infants or toddlers. In addition, it may also indicate that Societies have been increasingly successful in modifying their policies and practices in relation to foster parents and that consequently the closure rate has gradually decreased.

During the years from 1966 to 1977, 17 Societies approved 516 more foster homes than they closed. The top 10 Societies in this category and the difference of foster home approvals over closures in rank order is as follows: Peel, Simcoe, Muskoka, Algoma, York, Halton, Grey, Brant, Perth and Leeds-Grenville, with a variation from 81 to 27 homes or an average of 43.8 more homes approved than closed.

In contrast, there are 33 Societies which closed 2897 more foster homes than they approved during the same period of time. Again the 10 Societies with the largest difference in rank order are: Toronto, Toronto R.C., Sudbury, Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Hamilton, Durham, Essex R.C., Hamilton R.C., Temiskaming, with a variation from 790 to 62 homes or an average of 241.3 more homes closed than approved.

Also of interest is that all the large urban centres and large Societies are major losers. Somewhat surprisingly, most of the suburban communities around Metro Toronto were able to show an increase (i.e., York, Simcoe, Peel and Halton), whereas Durham shows a decrease. In an interview with Mrs. J. Ruse of Metro CAS, she estimated that 75 percent of all inquiries stimulated by their advertising had to be referred to surrounding counties. Consequently, there is a possibility that any efforts at province-wide publicity about foster care may have a differential effect with the "successful" Societies increasing their advantage. Therefore, any solution to this imbalance will need to consider ways and means of overcoming blocks to the movement of children from the large urban areas to neighbouring areas.

Of the Northern Societies, only Algoma (48 homes) and Kenora (21 homes) were able to recruit and approve more homes than were closed from 1966 to 1977.

To what extent these different outcomes reflect differences in philosophy, staffing patterns, and priority given to foster care generally is unknown. Possibly the operational reviews of Societies may reveal some of the differences and similarities among the Societies in regard to foster care policies, degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction by foster parents, and related matters.

The 1972 and 1973 field surveys noted the reasons for foster home closure during those two years. The number one reason was that foster parents no longer wished to care for children (26 percent and 23 percent respectively). However, why they no longer wished to foster is not known. The other major reasons, in rank order, are as shown in the next table.

TABLE 8
Reasons Foster Homes Closed (Field Survey)

<u>Reason</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1972</u>
	%	%
Foster Parents moved from area	12	12
Illness of Foster Parents	9	10
Children born to Foster Parents	6	7
Foster Parents on vacation or rest	4	4
Foster Parents too old or retired	3	3
Lack of use and Foster Parents lost interest	4	2

The other major category (out of seven other listed reasons) was "Other" which received 11 percent in 1973 and 14 percent in 1972.

The 1977 OACAS Survey included a section on foster care, including a heading on "why close". A tabulation of reasons under major headings provides information on the number of times specific reasons are listed by individual Societies. The number of reasons are contrasted in the table with the rank order of that reason as they appeared in the earlier field surveys.

TABLE 9
Reasons Foster Homes Closed (OACAS Survey)

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Times Listed in OACAS Survey</u>	<u>Field Survey Rank Order</u>
Moving	22	2nd
Illness	16	3rd
Employment	15	not listed separately
Burnt out, want rest	14	5th
Family crisis, needs of own family	14	not listed separately
Pregnancy, birth of child	13	4th
Age, retiring	11	6th
Too demanding do not want older child	10	no equivalent

A number of possible conclusions are suggested by this information. A major loss of foster homes is due to foster parents moving from one Society's jurisdiction to another and at that point discontinuing as foster parents. Since all Societies presumably would prefer continuity of placement for a child, and many foster children do move with foster parents to new locations, this reason may be used to cover up other reasons for discontinuing fostering. On the other hand the rank order of reasons in 1972 and 1973 is quite similar to the rank order of reasons listed in the OACAS Survey. Despite that, it would seem to be very significant that from 1973 to 1977 three clusters of reasons are now mentioned frequently enough to be identified separately. These are: seeking full time employment, family crisis including giving greater priority to needs of own family, and comments about fostering being too demanding or not wanting to care for older children. These reasons may reflect the fact that fostering older or difficult children is making increased demands on foster families. It must also be remembered that foster families are subject to the same stresses on marriage and family life as any other contemporary family and this contributes to the turnover rate.

In any case the reasons for closure do give some clues as to areas needing closer investigation and confirmation. With more extensive knowledge it should be possible to adjust the foster care arrangement to meet more adequately the needs of foster parents and thereby increase the effectiveness of the program.

Foster Care Within the Juvenile Corrections System

Foster care placements have not figured as prominently in Juvenile Corrections as in Child Welfare. In addition, Juvenile Corrections lacks the detailed statistics on foster homes comparable to those provided by the Monthly Statistical Report for each Society. Consequently, it will not be possible to explore trends from the same perspectives.

The Ministry's annual report is based on a fiscal year and only includes the first placement away from Training School. Since wards often have several subsequent placements, the report does not reflect the full extent of the use of foster care. In order to show the actual placements, Table 10 uses the figures from the Computer file for Training School Wards, calculated daily as part of the Juvenile Information System. Unfortunately, information on the use of foster care for juveniles on probation is not given in the computer data bank.

TABLE 10

Placement of Training School Wards in Foster Care and Group Homes on March 31 each year

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Wardship Count</u>	<u>Training School Count</u>	<u>Group Home Count</u>	<u>Foster Home Placement</u>	<u>Special Rate Foster Home *</u>	<u>Total Foster Care</u>
1974	3770	1146	174	397	78	475
1975	3440	1086	197	306	58	364
1976	2875	960	193	178	75	253
1977	2405	739	164	169	118	287
1978	2078	651	161	127	149	276
1979**	1927	595	154	87	171	258

* "Special Rate Foster Home" is the term used by Probation and Aftercare for foster homes paid a supplementary rate and should not be equated with special foster care as proposed in this review.

** All figures for 1979 are given for March 5. In addition to foster care and group homes, total placement count includes a variety of placements not shown here.

TABLE 11

**Foster and Group Placements* as a Percent of
Total Wardship Count on March 31st**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Wardship Count</u>	<u>Training School Count</u>	<u>Group Home Count</u>	<u>Foster Home</u>	<u>Special Rate Foster **</u>	<u>Total Foster Rate</u>
1974	3770	30.4%	4.6%	10.5%	2.1%	12.6%
1975	3440	31.6%	5.7%	8.9%	1.7%	10.6%
1976	2875	33.4%	6.7%	6.2%	2.6%	8.8%
1977	2405	30.7%	6.8%	7.0%	4.9%	11.9%
1978	2078	31.3%	7.7%	6.1%	7.2%	13.3%
1979***	1927	30.9%	8.0%	4.5%	8.9%	13.4%

* Other placements such as self-contained accommodation, adult corrections, are not shown.

** Explanation as given under previous table still applies.

*** 1979 figures are for March 5.

Although admissions to Training School Wardship have decreased approximately 49 percent since 1974, the use of regular foster care for these wards has dropped about 78 percent for the dates given. Prior to 1973-74 there were no special rate provisions. Since special rate foster care was instituted, using 1974 as a base, special foster care placements for the dates shown have more than doubled. Year end reports corroborate these trends. The fact that currently more placements are made to special rate homes than to regular foster homes may reflect current thinking that almost all children who become wards must be difficult to manage. The special rates may also be a response to foster parents who complain about the increasing difficulty in managing these teenagers. A slightly higher percentage of girls than boys is placed in foster care but the increased use of special rate homes is parallel for both boys and girls.

TABLE 12
Foster and Special Rate Foster Placements
Each March 31, by Sex of Child

Boys

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Wards</u>	<u>In Foster Homes</u>	<u>% of Wards</u>	<u>In Special Rate Homes**</u>	<u>% of Wards</u>	<u>Total % in Foster Care</u>
1974	2586	255	9.9%	58	2.2%	12.1%
1975	2358	189	8.0%	46	1.9%	9.9%
1976	2043	113	5.5%	60	2.9%	8.4%
1977	1763	110	6.2%	90	5.1%	11.3%
1978	1602	86	5.4%	123	7.7%	13.1%
1979*	1543	68	4.4%	137	8.9%	13.3%

* 1979 figures are for March 5

Girls

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Wards</u>	<u>In Foster Homes</u>	<u>% of Wards</u>	<u>In Special Rate Homes**</u>	<u>% of Wards</u>	<u>Total % in Foster Care</u>
1974	1184	142	12.0%	20	1.7%	13.7%
1975	1082	117	10.8%	12	1.1%	11.9%
1976	832	65	7.8%	15	1.8%	9.6%
1977	642	59	9.2%	28	4.4%	13.6%
1978	476	41	8.6%	26	5.5%	14.1%
1979*	384	19	4.9%	34	8.8%	13.7%

* 1979 figures are for March 5

** Explanation as given under Table 10 applies.

In spite of the increased use of special rate foster homes, the total use of community placement - group, foster, or other, does not seem to have affected the ratio of wards on the Training School count. This has remained relatively steady at slightly less than one out of three in Training School. It is noteworthy for foster care and other placements that the rapid decrease in the actual numbers being handled by this system, 49 percent since 1974, is in marked contrast to the increase in the general population age 13-18 during these years and to the increase in teens in care with Children's Aid Societies (an 11 percent increase from 1974 to 1978).

In Metro Toronto and Thunder Bay, Probation and After Care offices set up a staff position for Coordinator of Foster Homes to recruit and screen applicants, to decide on appropriate placements and to provide training and support to foster homes. As a result, their policy requires that all foster homes become part of a central pool to be available for the most appropriate placement. The other areas have developed various systems for coordination of placement functions. For instance, the supervisor may have a list of all homes. However, in areas where the foster care resource is not centrally coordinated, some officers continue to maintain their own roster of foster homes that they recruited and developed. Consequently, matching of child to foster home takes place within this restricted context as opposed to a central pool of foster homes.

The Thunder Bay Services has an interesting foster care variation which is called the Extended Foster Family model. The first Extended Family unit came into operation on March 1, 1978 and three are now in operation. Each unit consists of six families who have been trained and selected for participation in this new approach. The program requires the foster parents to work with one another in caring for each other's foster children. It is felt that "Extended Families" located in the more remote small communities in the North are more capable of sustaining placements, even in the absence of immediate worker assistance. One other feature is noteworthy. The homes are available to both the Children's Aid Society and the Probation and After Care Services. Each family is considered a special rate home at a per diem of \$10.00 per child.

The Metro Toronto Probation and After Care Services has proposed a specialized foster parent program built on the Parent-Therapist model developed at the Chedoke Child and Family Centre in Hamilton.

In connection with both these developments it is significant that innovative designs and proposals are coming forward from the two areas that have given specific staff specialized responsibility for foster care program coordination.

Foster Care Within the Children's Mental Health System

There are only two programs within the Children's Mental Health System that use a variation of foster care. The first one was established in 1972 by the Chedoke-McMaster Centre in Hamilton and the second is a joint project of the Toronto CAS and Thistleton Regional Centre. The latter was created in 1973 and is known as the CAS-Thistleton Family Care Program.

a) The Parent-Therapist Program, Hamilton

The Parent-Therapist Program in Hamilton has two unique, innovative features:

- o The primary responsibility for treatment is assumed by the parent-therapists and their families.
- o The support to the parent-therapist families is provided by other parent-therapist families and not by professionals. Professional staff serve only as supervisors and consultants.

Family groups have been set up with five parent-therapist couples within each group. Individual couples are able to call on the resources of the total group for problem-solving and emotional support. This also means that children are contained within the groups so that weekend relief arrangements are managed by that group. If a move is necessary a child can usually be placed within the group. This helps to ensure continuity for the child and minimizes disruption.

Parent-therapists are involved in a four-week orientation session followed by weekly formal three-hour sessions which deal with childrens' behaviour, specific treatment and management skills.

The first evaluation of the program was completed at the end of 1975. At that time 27 children, age six to twelve, had been assigned to the program. All the children had such severe personality and conduct problems that they could not be maintained in their prior living arrangements. Many had a history of chronic running away and extensive police contact. A quarter of the children were wards of the local Societies and the balance were placed in the homes by their natural families. Four children could not be maintained in the parent-therapist homes and had to be placed in more structured environments.

The conclusion in 1975 and in subsequent reports was that the children did not make improvements which were significantly different from those of children in the traditional residential treatment centres. All groups showed improvement on some measures but these were not related to age, sex, or the treatment modality to which the child was assigned. However, the cost of the parent-therapist treatment program was \$30.16 per diem in 1974, about half that of the centres. Therefore the program appeared to be just as effective and with a significant saving.

The initial recruitment effort is of interest. The Centre received about 300 inquiries from which 75 families were interviewed and assessed in depth for a final selection of 15 families. The Centre concluded that their community had a relatively large pool of well-qualified lay people interested in being trained to assume responsibility for the care and treatment of difficult children.

The parent-therapists are considered part-time employees of Chedoke Hospital and are hired using separate contracts. Each person receives a bi-weekly salary cheque whether or not a child has been placed in that home.

Salaries fall into two categories with the first category including all individuals who have been active in the program for their initial 36 months. Category 1 has five levels and to move from level five to Category 2, a minimum of twelve months' service is required. The second category, parent-therapist, involves additional duties such as supervision of less experienced parent-therapists.

In addition, provision is made for parent-therapists relief couples. They too receive a salary though up to a lower maximum. All salaries are taxable. (For more details, see chapter on compensation.)

b) Toronto CAS-Thistletown Family Care Program

The CAS-Thistletown Family Care Program was developed in 1973 to serve as a half-way step between the in-patient services of the Centre and the return to the natural family or foster care. The program might just as easily have been described under Child Welfare as it is a joint venture.

The program is part of the Society's Specialized Foster Home Program. It stresses the involvement of both foster parents in the program including contact with Thistletown staff and working with natural parents. It also involves participation in a training program and monthly group meetings.

In 1977 there were 10 homes in the program, each with one child. In 1977 11 children received service. The per diem rate in 1977 ranged from \$16.42 to \$17.82. Funding is the same as for specialized foster homes in Toronto.

Foster Allowances Under Provincial Benefits

Foster allowances are available under both General Welfare Assistance and Family Benefits. Monies are paid on behalf of children who are being cared for by relatives or friends where the parents are dead, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to care for their children (i.e., in hospital or correctional institution).

The monthly rates as of June, 1977 are:

- o \$100 for the 1st child;
- o \$80 for the 2nd child; and
- o \$70 for each additional child.

These rates are expected to cover all everyday needs, though some provision exists for coverage of special expenses.

At the end of November 1978, there were 1,000 children on the General Welfare foster allowance. The number typically fluctuates between 800 and 1100. For the same month there were 4,847 children in 2,343 homes receiving the foster allowance under Family Benefits.

Two issues arise from time to time in regard to these foster allowances. Firstly, there is ambiguity and confusion created by the use of the term "foster allowance". Merchants, schools and others are confused by the similar designations but vastly differing benefits and expectations between fostering within say, the child welfare system and within the income maintenance system. Complaints about neglect are sometimes made about "foster" placements under the income maintenance system, and because of the similar designations, result in unnecessary and unjustified criticism of the foster care system within child welfare or juvenile corrections.

Another designation for such an income maintenance allowance would quickly overcome such problems.

The other issue may be more difficult to resolve. As relatives or friends learn about the much more generous provisions of foster parent rates under child welfare, some decide they too should get the higher rate. In some cases the surrogate parents threaten to dump the children onto the Society unless the Society pays their higher rate to them. Not wanting the children to experience another move, Societies often feel they have little choice but to give in to the pressure. Usually the condition is that the surrogate parents must undergo a home study and be approved as a foster home. Since the home is evaluated with respect to the needs of particular children already in the home, the usual standards applied to foster home applicants may be relaxed somewhat.

It should be noted that Societies also place with relatives or sometimes with friends, and then provide the usual financial benefits, and it is therefore, difficult to explain why there should be such a difference in rates.

III REVIEW OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

1. DEFINITIONS AND RANGE OF FOSTER CARE SERVICES

Foster care has a number of variations or applications that lack common definitions and clearly identifiable features that would enable comparison between similar approaches and distinguish foster care from other systems such as parent-operated group care. The literature is of little help in deciding how to define the range of foster care services in Ontario.

Continuum of Services Within the Foster Care Field

The mainstream of a foster care continuum is composed of "regular foster homes" at the volunteer end and "special" or "career" foster homes at the other end. In between, somewhere, is a range of foster homes which receive supplementary rates in recognition of the extra demands posed by a specific child. In addition, a variety of specialized applications or titles may be used. One of the objectives of any program development should be to develop a consensus on the mainstream continuum and to avoid individual designations for common services.

One of these types of services is placement with relatives or friends where boarding payments are made. Usually these homes are not approved within the same standards as regular foster homes and few continue after the specific child leaves their home. Some Societies call these special homes, however, this then conflicts with the similar designation within the continuum. It would be more appropriate to call these "provisional foster homes".

Elements which should be Common to all Foster Homes in Continuum

- o The parenting responsibility is handled within a family context with the foster parents acting as substitute parents.
- o The number of unrelated children placed in the home is generally below three. (The issue of numbers will be dealt with as part of Residential Care Standards.)
- o All foster parents should receive the opportunity and be encouraged to participate in discussions and planning in regard to children in their care.
- o Contracts should be used to make explicit the expectations of the agency and the foster parents. Similarly, all foster homes may be involved in simple forms of contracting with the child who is in their care.
- o The parenting responsibility is for a twenty-four-hour day.

Regular Foster Care

A. Definition

Placement in a family environment where the foster parents are reimbursed for age-appropriate child maintenance costs but are not reimbursed for their services on behalf of the child. It is expected that the substitute family life experience and family milieu will meet the needs of the foster child.

B. Critical Components/Distinguishing Features

- o The reimbursement covers maintenance costs (i.e. food, room, out-of-pocket expenses).
- o However, there is no reimbursement for the services of the foster parent. The services are the voluntary contribution donated by the foster parent (gift of love).
- o There is little structure apart from basic expectations involved in living together as a family. The family routines provide the milieu which is expected to support the foster child in a positive way. Consequently, the life style of the foster parent is not expected to change appreciably to accommodate the needs of a particular child.
- o Regular foster care is most appropriate for younger, less damaged children, but not appropriate for highly disturbed children who usually need basic care plus some level of remediation.
- o The placement match between child and family is a very critical factor in the success of the placement.
- o This program may be seen as the beginning of a career ladder by those foster parents interested in a fostering career, or again, it may represent the ultimate level for foster parents who wish to emphasize the volunteer aspect.

Supplementary Foster Care Rates

A. Definition

A placement where, because of the special needs of a child, foster parents are paid a supplementary amount (over and above the maintenance rate) to recognize the extra demands, involvement, and skill needed to care for a specific child.

B. Critical Components/Distinguishing Features

- o Supplementary payments are made for the extra cost and service required to care for the child (e.g., enuretic or spina bifida child).
- o Additional payments may also be made for a combination of extra service, stress factors or skill requirements, thereby providing recognition that a degree of remediation is involved in the care of the child.
- o Supplementary rates follow the child.
- o The use of receiving or holding foster homes would fit within the supplementary rate definition. A retainer rate may be paid as well as a supplementary rate during placements. The extra rate recognizes that holding services are especially stressful and demanding.
- o Inasmuch as the supplementary payments are made in respect to extra cost related to the additional care, they should usually be seen as non-taxable. To the extent to which they reflect extra service demands, they may be considered taxable.

Special Foster Care

A. Definition

The placement in a family environment which is expected to provide ongoing rehabilitative/remediative care.

This is an individualized placement that is seen as an alternative to group residential or institutional care. The natural parental skills of foster parents have been upgraded in professional knowledge and clinical skills to enable them to provide care to a wider group of difficult to place children.

B. Critical Components/Distinguishing Features

- o The foster parents are paid a fee which recognizes their special skill and training that enables them to cope with more difficult children. Consequently, the special rate does not follow the child but remains with the foster home. In view of this, it is essential that there be a careful assessment of the child to ensure that the child requires this level of service.

- o This type of home most closely resembles what might be called "career foster parenting" and may involve people with professional qualifications.
- o These foster parents would be expected to change their lifestyles and control their responses to children, in keeping with the goals that have been developed for the child. In addition, the foster parents would be involved in the setting of goals for the child, daily recordings, etc.
- o A higher level of commitment to the child will be demanded of these foster parents than in the previous types of foster care. Also, these foster homes require a more extensive support system to enable them to cope with the multiple impact of the more difficult child.
- o Since the extra payments are a fee for service, they are taxable for income purposes.
- o This level of care overlaps with some group/institutional care except for the numbers of children that may be involved. (Treatment foster care would usually be restricted to two unrelated children.) Special foster care permits this level of care to be moved from group/institutional settings to more normalized, individual and family-like settings.

The table at the end of this chapter summarizes, on a number of variables, the differences between traditional and special foster homes (Steinhauer, 1979). What has been defined in this chapter as a regular foster home is equivalent to the traditional foster home of the chart, though it is likely that on a few variables the concept and practices of a regular foster home have moved from the traditional position. The table provides a useful contrast between the opposite ends of the foster care continuum, though the reality of foster care is not as stark or as clear cut as illustrated. The blending between the two positions, as noted earlier, is most frequently seen in placements involving supplementary rates.

A common assumption and impression is that a high proportion of the children now coming into care have gone through such damaging experiences that some degree of remediation is required. If true, this would imply that few would fit within a goal of normalization but instead would require some degree of remediation.

The Employment Standards Act

The approach taken here assumes that the special foster parents are not employees of an agency but work under a contract for a fee for service. Consequently, it is expected they will be exempted from the hours of employment provisions under The Employment Standards Act. If this proves to be incorrect it will be necessary to seek inclusion of special foster parents in any exemption that may be sought of the Ministry of Labour.

Conclusions for Discussion

- o That a continuum of foster care concept be accepted with at least three types of care as described.
- o That the definitions and critical components be accepted as "working definitions" for consultation and eventual implementation (with necessary changes) across the province.
- o That the matter of The Employment Standards Act be kept in mind as that issue is worked through in reference to group homes and institutions.

COMPARISON OF TRADITIONAL AND SPECIALIZED FOSTER HOMES*

	<u>TRADITIONAL FOSTER HOME</u>	<u>SPECIALIZED FOSTER HOME</u>
Role of Foster Parents	Parent Surrogates: provide basic care.	Provide basic care and treatment program (i.e., parent therapists, not parent surrogates).
Types of Children	Chiefly infants and young children.	Chiefly older and "special need" children, i.e., those with mental, physical, emotional and behavioural problems requiring not just care but active treatment.
Motivation	Primarily voluntary: not paid for time or service.	Primarily a career choice; paid for time and services provided.
Funding	Boarding and maintenance allowance.	Boarding and maintenance allowance PLUS increment related to special services provided (treatment, etc.).
Goal	Normalization.	Remediation.
Training of Foster Parents	None required.	Ongoing training and supervision would be expected. Previous professional training might not be required depending on program.

* Adapted from Steinhauer (1979).

TRADITIONAL FOSTER HOMESPECIALIZED FOSTER HOME

Services Offered:

First Year

Contract to provide care and cooperate in attempt to reunite child with family if possible.

First Year

Contract to provide basic care and cooperate in attempt to reunite child with family if possible.

Subsequently: alternatives would include:

Subsequently: alternatives would include:

- (a) Absorption of child into the family
- adoption
 - exclusive foster care with minimal ongoing contact with child's birth parents, agency.

- (a) Accepting treatment program designed to meet the needs of the child.
- This would involve active involvement with birth parents if indicated, supervision or ongoing training with agency, etc.

- (b) Releasing child for adoption.

- (b) Contract for set period of time (e.g., agency, foster parents, child) at the end of which recontracting would be possible if indicated and if agreeable to all parties but would not be expected. (There is the possibility but not the expectation of the child remaining in the home to maturity.)

Disruption of family lifestyle.

Usually minimal.

Usually considerable.

2. RECRUITMENT

Review of the Literature

The literature on recruitment of foster parents is fairly extensive and it is obvious that a great variety of approaches and combinations have been tried over the years. These range from extensive use of the media to ones that avoid the use of media in preference to other approaches.

One of the more unusual combinations was described by Glassberg (1965). The campaign, in the Philadelphia area, combined a mass recruitment campaign involving the various media with a direct telephone campaign. The telephone calls were made to particular sections of the city that contained gross characteristics considered desirable in needed foster parents, for example:

- o black population
- o income around \$5,000 (1962-64 campaign)
- o small number of working wives
- o home owners.

Calls were made by volunteers on a random selection basis. If the householder was interested a brochure was sent out. The householder was asked to call the agency for further discussions after receiving the brochure if there was further interest. The telephone calls reportedly were not considered an intrusion by families and all calls received a courteous, if not warm, reception.

Initial inquiries from all sources numbered about 40 per month, whereas, toward the end of the campaign inquiries reached over 200 per month. The agency concluded from this that recruitment must be seen as cumulative. However, they did not provide any evaluation on the success of their effort to recruit foster homes from the black population.

While it is difficult to evaluate any specific campaign and the results appear to be inconsistent or inconclusive, there is general agreement that the most successful recruitment is that done by foster parents. This involves the foster parent's network of friends and relatives who become interested as a result of their observations and interaction with foster parents. In addition, foster parents assist by becoming involved in speaking engagements and publicity about foster care.

Some of the other successful efforts include:

- o person-to-person neighbourhood recruitment
- o phone campaigns
- o letters to ratepayers associations
- o inserts in church bulletins
- o newspaper advertising
- o flyers distributed to homes and stores
- o television spot announcements
- o setting up offices in the community from which people are to be recruited.

Radio advertising was seen in the literature as having a low effectiveness (Vick, 1967). There are some hints in the literature as to how to increase the effectiveness of recruitment campaigns (Vasaly, 1976; Vick, 1967). These include:

- o use continuous, rather than sporadic intense recruitment campaigns
- o do not limit use to one or two media (most success with using as many as five media or approaches simultaneously)
- o the campaign should be timely and personalized (special, specific appeal)
- o give a realistic interpretation of the service, need
- o make immediate follow-up on inquiries
- o recognize the importance of social networks: (for example, foster parents often recruit others by word of mouth; dissatisfied foster parents can undermine campaigns within their circle of friends; how unsuccessful applicants are dealt with affects the image of fostering, and so on)
- o use public relations experts.

Alberta's Parent-Counsellor Program (equivalent to our proposed special foster care described as part of the continuum of foster care resources) involved an extensive recruitment campaign. The program evolved principles which were subsequently tested in Calgary and Edmonton in a recruitment campaign for regular foster parents. According to correspondence from the Director of the Alberta Parent-Counsellors' Program (dated July 27, 1976, and addressed to Mr. R. Naundorf, Metro CAS) the principles with adaptations, are applicable to the recruitment of all foster parents.

The principles, as related to Parent-Counsellors, are:

1. The systematic use of public media and community contacts is an effective method of recruiting parent counsellors and of interpreting a program to the community.
2. An explicit, realistic and descriptive image should be portrayed in a campaign, as compared to one based on an emotional appeal or one that is not clear about the necessary commitments.
3. Advertising stressing parent counselling, job, professionalism, problem children, training and supervision, second income, and alternatives to institutions is effective in recruiting parent counsellors.
4. Recruitment campaigns should be designed to encourage response from those members of the community considered appropriately suited for the job.
5. Paid use of media to recruit parent counsellors may be a less expensive method than one relying solely upon social work activities.
6. Recruitment efforts should carefully deploy staff in roles for which their education and experience best suits them.
7. No recruitment should be undertaken unless staff are able to respond to inquiries in a way that maintains necessary quality.
8. Campaigns necessitating expenditure of staff time and public funds should be carefully evaluated and reported upon.

Ontario Experience, Efforts

Toronto Catholic Society, during the last two years has been able to approve more foster homes than it has closed. The trend is well illustrated by the following table.

TABLE 13
NUMBERS OF FOSTER HOMES, APPROVED AND CLOSED

<u>Year</u>	<u>Approvals</u>	<u>Closed</u>	<u>Difference</u>
1974	83	151	-68
1975	146	148	-2
1976	124	142	-18
1977	127	113	+14
1978	139	88	+51

The changed trend is in marked contrast to the years from 1966-1977 which showed that the Catholic Society closed 354 more homes than were approved with an average loss of about 30 per year. The explanation for the change appears to be relatively simple. In April, 1974, a Foster Care Resources Division was set up with the goal of giving increased priority to the development of foster care resources. In relation to recruitment, their main goal was to maintain a steady flow of inquiries. The means to that goal have been:

- o a consistent recruitment plan with clearly defined, attainable goals
- o a scheme that utilized a variety of communication media to reach various segments of the public.

The Society has found that consistent advertising has resulted in an increase in the number of inquiries. In 1974 there were 31 inquiries per month, whereas in 1975 there were 70 inquiries per month.

Another positive change occurred in the ratio of inquiries to approved homes. In 1974, 7.6 inquiries produced one home; in 1975 this improved as 5.4 inquiries produced a home.

In 1975 the Society recorded the recruitment sources of inquiries. For the first eight months the rank order of recruitment sources was:

self referral	-	40.0%
newspaper	-	24.3%
parish bulletin	-	16.5%
other	-	8.9%
foster parents	-	7.8%
T.V. or radio	-	2.8%

The high proportion of self referrals was interpreted to indicate cumulative effect of word of mouth and advertising messages to the point where the people inquiring "just happened to know" that they should call the CAS when they wanted to foster. (Foster Care Resources Division 12 Month Report, April, 1974-June, 1975, and conversations with Mrs. W. Koneri.)

Around the province, Children's Aid Societies are grouped into zones and the local directors are encouraged to meet on a regular basis within those areas. The group that meets at London has for about four years cooperated in joint publicity efforts. The local T.V. station provides coverage for the total zone. T.V. spots are supplemented with printed materials of high quality. Most of the spots on foster care are run during an annual campaign.

Miss Gibson, of London CAS, coordinates the joint publicity efforts. The Societies involved have not tried to rate the effectiveness of their effort, though all have received inquiries in response to the publicity. Miss Gibson, however, feels there are some intangible gains from such efforts. It results in increased public awareness; it can enhance the image of fostering and may result in an application at some future date. Since foster parents are in many ways special people, one should not expect a dramatic increase or immediate results from publicity.

The advantage of the joint campaign has been the reduced per unit costs of the printed material and advertising. It has also allowed the Societies to engage competent persons to develop material of a professional quality.

The London Society has supplemented the joint publicity efforts in a number of ways. They used inserts with hydro bills and sponsored an essay on foster care. In addition, they had coffee parties involving foster parents, and through local advertising invited people to attend and meet their area's foster parents.

Similarly, the two Hamilton Societies and Halton are presently considering a joint 52 week campaign with each Society contributing a pro rata amount. Matching amounts will be provided as public announcements. To augment the Societies' contribution, it is planned to approach local businesses, foundations, major industries, and service clubs for contributions. On that basis it is hoped to develop a sustained campaign involving newspaper, T.V. and radio as well as special events.

In contacting Society representatives as well as Probation and After Care there was uniform agreement that word-of-mouth, especially if initiated by foster parents, is the most effective recruitment method. Also there was general agreement that brief recruitment publicity campaigns are of questionable utility - families thinking of fostering need time to consider such a proposition and so do not respond well to single or emergency campaigns. Finally, there was agreement that a comprehensive, varied, ongoing campaign is needed to reach families in their individual settings.

Province-Wide Recruitment, Public Relations Efforts

Over the years the OACAS has recommended that Ontario undertake a foster recruitment campaign similar to the successful "Today's Child" newspaper column and the T.V. program "Family Finder".

There are some obvious differences between fostering and adoptions that restrict the use of this adoption format for foster care. In adoptions the children are crown wards, and permanent planning is involved, whereas, many of the children in foster care are involved in a short-term placement or one of undefined duration. Relationship with parents, consent of parents to the use of a child's picture are all limitations.

In the short run, in the absence of any assurance that the field will be able to respond quickly and predictably, provincial publicity should avoid using individual children, except possibly for composite descriptions. These should be used basically as a public education means and to increase the readership of any advertising. Aside from public information and awareness, the other major purpose of provincial public relations should be to enhance the image of foster care.

By using such a "low key, soft approach" the Province can most effectively assist local efforts. At the same time efforts need to be made to encourage more effective and coordinated activities at the local level. The following types of approaches could be made:

- o The Communications Branch and selected representatives from the field could develop printed material of high quality that would be available to Societies and local Probation and After Care offices for their recruitment education campaigns.

- o The Foster Program Coordinator and representatives from the Communications Branch could act as consultants to the smaller Societies in designing and developing comprehensive recruitment approaches.
- o The Foster Program Coordinator could encourage referrals, as appropriate, between Societies and local Probation and After Care offices to ensure that the interests of inquirers are met.

In the development of printed material, efforts should be made to develop campaigns that will lead to inquiries for both child welfare and juvenile corrections. However, in view of the many differences between the two systems more specific information will require separate materials.

Conclusions for Discussion

- o That Ontario enter into province-wide public education and image-building public relations in regard to foster care; initially, this might use the present vehicles of "Today's Child" and "Family Finder".
- o That the possibility of province-wide publicity efforts should be investigated.
- o That any province-wide foster care publicity efforts be general, low-key in nature which complement more specific local recruitment campaigns.
- o That separate campaigns may need to be developed for regular and special foster care.
- o That consultative help be provided to the local level with one objective being the encouragement of joint area campaigns.
- o That a variety of printed materials be developed (i.e. pamphlets, inserts, posters, etc.) by the Ministry to support local recruitment efforts and that these should include French language printed materials.
- o That a market research approach be used in developing public education, public relations and recruitment campaigns and that, in addition, the Alberta experience should be used in developing a recruitment campaign.
- o That all major campaigns include a research component to ensure that efforts are monitored and evaluated for effectiveness.

3. SELECTION

Review of the Literature

A review of the literature on agencies' practices (Taylor and Starr, 1965) suggests that they may be placing too much expectation on the motivation of prospective foster parents. Studies show there is little difference in the quality of care provided by "highly" or "lowly" motivated foster parent applicants. Consequently, it was concluded that agencies should follow up more consistently and persistently with those persons who inquire but who fail to complete forms or otherwise follow through.

The literature review also suggests that most agencies use a model resembling the "ideal" middle class family when selecting foster parents. There is an indirect support for this view in Barbara Rosenblum's research in Hamilton. She found that the three agencies involved in the research project were becoming less successful in recruiting families with modest incomes. (In the Hamilton study, Rosenblum concluded that for families with lower income an increase in the boarding rates might reverse this trend by allowing the wife to remain at home instead of being forced to find employment outside the home.)

Anthony Maluccio, in an article on selecting foster parents for disturbed children (1966), suggests four selection criteria:

- o applicants are able to cope with anxiety and are able to use it constructively
- o they have a readiness to tolerate the need for personal growth
- o applicants are able to avoid identifying the child with experiences in their own past
- o they are willing and able to use casework services.

Another view, expressed by Kadushin (1967), is that selection must be based on complementarity of needs rather than viewing the home as either good or bad.

When one considers that much of foster care is based on helping relationships, then undoubtedly the findings of Truax and Carkhuff (1967) should be given serious consideration in selecting foster parents. The various schools of therapy and counselling recognize three essential ingredients which are described by the authors as "accurate empathy, nonpossessive warmth, and genuineness". These are considered basic qualities that can be enhanced with instruction but if missing cannot be produced by training or education. Subsequent writings have sought to operationalize these three essential qualities so that their presence can be verified, measured and enhanced by instruction.

The literature describes some different approaches to the staff demands involved in the screening of inquiries. Gabrovic (1969) describes one process in which active foster parents were used in the first stage of the screening process. At the initial contact with the agency, the inquirers were asked to make contact with an active foster parent couple. This contact served to familiarize potential applicants with the foster parent role and thereby enabled them to involve themselves more actively in the home study process. Aside from saving the worker's time, this approach was seen as also providing benefits to the foster parents, who became involved in providing a description of their role and activities.

Wolins (1963) suggested a two-level approach to the selection process. The first level would seek to determine that the homes will meet the needs of most of the children in the program, or at least the broad needs of many of the children. At the second level, the needs of the individual child become critical. At this stage, the matching of a child and home may demand that further specific criteria be considered.

On that basis, Wolins suggests that the initial screening should involve two aspects. The agency should use a coarse screening to test for such gross eligibility factors as physical well-being, space, income, location and so forth. The inquirer similarly is involved in a self-screen based on the contact with the agency and the knowledge gained about the role of foster parents. The second screening is more refined and deals with attitudinal and psychodynamic factors.

In 1970, Santa Clara County (California) developed a group approach to the selection process. The agency used this approach to select and to develop foster homes for emotionally disturbed children between six and thirteen years of age. The total process involved media publicity describing the agency, foster care and the type of children served.

Inquiries generated by the publicity were dealt with in an introductory meeting (groupings of six to seven couples) which provided general information about the program. Based on that information, couples were invited to attend a series of six educational meetings which then dealt more specifically with the demands of fostering emotionally disturbed children. These educational meetings included meetings with approved foster parents. Following the group meetings, individual meetings were scheduled with the social worker. At the conclusion of the process, social workers felt they knew applicants sufficiently to make decisions about matching children with appropriate homes. (Gross and Bussard, 1970.)

In 1972 the Utah Division of Family Services adopted a self-approval selection method. The method involves broad recruitment activities and group training with self-approval components integrated with the process. This is supplemented by additional orientation at the time of placement and continuing group meetings after placement.

Two hundred homes were licensed in the first six months of the program. After one year they concluded there was no significant difference between this and the traditional approach in the number of homes closed or families withdrawn. They also identified a number of advantages:

- o The system required the participation of both parents in training and thus succeeded in involving the foster father more effectively from the start.
- o It elevated the status of foster parents to that of responsible colleagues rather than clients and also stimulated their involvement.
- o It promoted more realistic understanding and expectations of problems inherent in foster care.
- o Workers were freed of the time-demanding individualized home study and so were able to spend more time in positive training activities and recruitment.
- o It improved public relations and enhanced cooperation of foster parents.

Despite concerns to the contrary, it was found that couples did screen themselves out as they came to realize voluntarily that foster care was not appropriate for them (Freund, 1976).

The approach has also been adopted by the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services. In 1974, the Home Finding Division of New York's Westchester County Department of Family and Child Social Services adopted a similar project. After a short period of operation they concluded that this was a promising method of inducting foster parents. (Freund, 1976.)

The Ontario Scene

There is no specific information available on the selection criteria used by Societies or by Probation and After Care. On the other hand, there seems to be some support for a group selection process with a pronounced educational content. However, it is doubtful if there would be widespread support for a completely self-approval selection method. Nevertheless, the selection process used in Toronto by the Foster Home Coordinator for Probation and After Care appears to be quite similar to the process developed in Utah.

Some Societies have experimented with group intake meetings to deal with inquiries, whereas others deal with inquiries on an individual basis but build in group meetings as part of the home study process or as part of orientation sessions after approval. The variations and combinations that are possible are many and, depending on such factors as distance, time, and number of inquiries at any one time, have all influenced what has been tried. While it is unrealistic to expect uniformity in the actual process, a reasonable goal would be to work toward a greater consensus to use group and educational approaches. The image of the traditional evaluative, and possibly intrusive home study can create a psychological hurdle unless we modify or change the process. Therefore Societies should be encouraged to have an informative group process that allows couples or individuals to explore the possibility of foster care without requiring an early decision.

Halton CAS, as of the fall of 1978, tried a selection process which uses foster parents and volunteers to carry out home studies. A similar approach has been in effect for over a year in adoptions and uses adoptive parents. The original impetus for the approach came from a similar program operating successfully in Rochester.

The foster parents and volunteers are responsible, with some assistance and supervision from agency staff, for carrying out the selection process. The is home study a combined evaluative/educative approach involving group meetings and individual interviews.

Several home studies have been completed following the new approach and the initial reaction is that these are equivalent to ones done by staff. The only identified difficulty has been a tendency for foster parents to project their values on the applicants. On the positive side, staff time has been freed for other duties and applications are being processed much more quickly. In addition, this method has enhanced the self-image of foster parents who see themselves as more a part of the agency operation and less as "clients".

A few years ago Toronto CAS tried a self-select foster home project based on the experience of the then Vancouver CAS. This involved a registry of interested families who had participated in a group meeting which explained the details of the proposed program. Thereafter, as teenagers came into care, they were given the opportunity of selecting their own foster home from the registry of interested families. Both the teenager and the foster parents signed a contract for an initial period of time with the option of renewing the contract. Once a child was in the home it was expected that the placement problems would be dealt with in scheduled group meetings.

This self-select project has been discontinued as it did not live up to expectations. If a similar project were tried again it appears that critical elements for success should include the following:

- o at least one personal interview with the prospective foster parents, handled by a team to complement perceptions
- o good leadership and a staff in charge committed to the concept but also astute and perceptive to pick up nuances in the group meeting
- o a staff of experienced, practical individuals.

Conclusions for Discussion

- o That procedures be established to deal with inquiries in an efficient and prompt manner. Whether this is done individually or in groups will depend on the situation but the aim should be to create opportunities to describe the foster care program to individuals and community representatives in a personal, yet economical, way.
- o That the selection process should not prematurely force couples to decide about fostering without ensuring that the choice is an informed one. Consequently, the use of group meetings, or contact with foster parents in some fashion should be encouraged as a prerequisite to the completion of an application.
- o That the processing of applications be done promptly within an educative context and a mutual decision-making process which initially has a form of gross screening (e.g., for qualities as defined by Truax) and then a more refined screening which provides the knowledge basis for eventual matching of child with family. Preference would be for a group process for most of this activity. Essentially the recruitment/selection should be seen as a two-stage process. The first stage should be primarily information sharing and in child welfare could include information about both foster care and adoptions. The second stage would have an educational base and involve a high degree of self-selection.
- o That consideration be given to seeing whether selection tools or techniques that might assist in the eventual matching task could be developed (e.g., groups means, questionnaires or standardized test shared with the applicants).
- o There have been few opportunities in the past for staff involved in foster home selection or development to discuss mutual problems, approaches, or philosophies. Consequently there will need to be opportunities for consensus building, together with efforts at a provincial level to learn what is actually happening at the local level.

4. FOSTER HOME TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The development of foster parents can be viewed very narrowly as restricted to formal training packages or it can be considered very broadly and include a very large range of activities. Presumably the very fact of caring for different children implies the acquiring of new knowledge and, possibly, additional skills. Furthermore, if foster parents are involved in all major decisions and case conferences in regard to their foster children, this in itself should be seen as adding an educational, developmental aspect for those foster parents. Consequently, it is suggested that developmental activities be seen within the broad context rather than restricted to formal learning experiences.

Several well developed and tested training packages now exist in the United States and elsewhere. The Child Welfare League of America has courses which were developed through subcontracts with curriculum design specialists. The sessions are focussed for adult learners who have life experience and prefer small group discussions rather than a school atmosphere. The group leader or co-leader is a co-learner and facilitator, not a teacher or worker. The packages are designed for seven two-hour sessions usually spread over seven or fourteen weeks. One series is "An Introduction to Fostering"; others are more specific - "Fostering a Retarded Child", "Fostering an Adolescent".

The latter course has materials designed to help foster parents become more aware of their own values and attitudes and to recognize that because of the developmental stage, fostering an adolescent takes special understanding. Further information is available from: Foster Parent Curriculum Project, Child Welfare League of America, 67 Irving Place, New York, N.Y., U.S.A. 10003.

Another course outline with workbooks and instructor's manuals on additional specialized topics is available from the Program Office, Foster Training Project, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan, U.S.A. 48197.

It should be remembered when reviewing or adapting these materials for the Ontario scene that legal provisions, agency roles, attitudes and practices here may be considerably different from those in some of the states.

In British Columbia, the Department of Human Resources for the Capital Region has encouraged the formation of a Natural Parents Group and promotes interaction between that group and the Foster Parents Association and staff involved in fostering. The Department puts on a five-week course on fostering as part of the home study. The course is generally given to foster parents whose applications have just been approved, and provides opportunities to learn about the agency, meet and talk with social workers, hear the natural parents' group's point of view and learn from experienced foster parents. "Old" foster parents who have not had the chance to attend such courses are encouraged to attend.

With regard to the Ontario scene, the OACAS surveys provide some overview of Societies' practices. One of the developmental activities is an orientation session to help foster parents with the transition into their new roles. According to the 1978 Surveys, forty Societies provide some type of orientation for their foster parents. Two Societies did not reply to the question, whereas eight indicated they did not provide any orientation sessions.

The 1978 Survey also included information on educational development programs for foster parents. The format of the questionnaire is unknown but the survey result indicates a number of educational activities, with most Societies using several activities. The most frequently mentioned activities were conferences and internal programs, which were mentioned 37 times each. The next most popular activity was special speakers which was listed by 29 Societies. Seventeen Societies used community colleges for courses to help their foster parents. Again, a few Societies did not respond to the question and 5 Societies indicated they provided no educational programs.

The Survey also polled whether foster parents were involved in either recruitment or orientation activities. Over half (24 Societies) involved foster parents, whereas the balance of Societies did not or had not answered that question. On the other hand, 34 Societies indicated that foster parents are regular participants in decisions affecting their foster child. Three indicated qualified involvement.

Local Foster Parent Associations usually have a marked developmental objective. Thirty-five Societies have a foster parent association and provide a variety of support and help to their association. For example, 33 Societies paid the dues of the Foster Parent Association of Ontario (FPAO) and 26 provided a direct grant to assist their local association.

As can be seen, there are great variations in how Societies view and support foster parent development. While the Survey provides no clue to the content of the educational activities, it seems safe to conclude that they too would show great variations in content, approach and possibly purpose. Consequently, a first move would probably involve learning what is presently being done and then seeing how best to build on those efforts. Despite the range of activities, according to Mrs. Ruth McDowell, President FPAO, some foster parents still feel they need more educational opportunities which provide both theory and practical applications.

With the development of a foster care continuum, consideration will also have to be given to training packages which support these differing expectations.

Conclusions for Discussion

- o That the first priority should be to learn what formal educational activities are undertaken in regard to foster parents. This would include being aware of training objectives, the content of any courses such as orientation meetings, and the instructional methods used.
- o That common and readily definable training needs (such as orientation) become the basis for training programs developed centrally and then made available to all agencies with foster parents.
- o That the training needs represented by special foster parents be considered in the development of training programs.
- o That the expectation be clearly accepted that foster parents should be invited to participate in all major decisions and case conferences respecting children in their care. When factors such as distance reduce attendance, consideration should be given to mileage payments and other support arrangements to ensure that foster parents are not prevented from attending.

5. PLACEMENT DECISIONS

Review of the Literature

The review of the literature did not bring forward any particular new developments though the Resource Section of the Local Child Welfare Services Self-Assessment Manual, published in 1978 by the U.S. Children's Bureau, is very helpful on a number of matters.

The importance of adequately preparing the child and foster parents for a planned placement has been recognized for years. Similarly, the importance of pre-placement visits has been stressed and accepted by all. For example, in a study by Cautley and Aldridge (1974) it was found that pre-placement visits increased the likelihood of a successful placement. However, how to ensure that these important steps are carried out in a competent, consistent fashion is a major program issue.

The sharing of information with foster parents was also found to be an important variable in the success or failure of placement. In another study by Cautley and Aldridge (1973), if the placement were discussed with both foster parents at least twice for at least three hours, the likelihood of success increased. Obviously again, the emergency placement of children, especially teenagers, in a foster home that has little prior knowledge of the child begs a placement breakdown. (Agency workers, of course, may be powerless to avoid emergency placements unless the agency has established more careful procedures, allocated staff time, and possibly set up an interim or emergency receiving home.) The same authors have also developed a handbook (1974) which appears to cover all aspects of placement.

Relatively little of the literature deals specifically with the difficult question of how best to match a child or children with a given home. L. Beaulieu, in a 1960 University of Ottawa master's study on successful foster parent-child matchings, suggests that successful placements occurred when specific assets and deficits in child and adult were matched. In an article on predicting success for new foster parents, Cautley and Aldridge (1973) suggest that a foster child should be the youngest child in the home, and that previous institutional placement, rejection in the longest previous placement, legal status away from parents, and history of poor physical care are negative factors in determining placement outcome. D. Kline, in an article on "Understanding and Evaluating a Foster Family's Capacity to Meet the Needs of an Individual Child" in *Social Service Review*, June, 1960, concludes that to provide a corrective emotional experience for a particular child, the foster parents should be free from the kinds of problems to which the child has a special sensitivity.

In discussion and correspondence with the Children's Services Division, Dr. Paul Steinhauer, University of Toronto professor and Senior Staff Psychiatrist, Hospital for Sick Children, notes that some children are too severely damaged to benefit from a normalizing experience, while others need remediation before they can fit into a foster care setting. Attempts to place such children in foster care will result in rejection, placement breakdown, discontinuity and failure. These children would have a more constructive and consistent experience in an institutional setting. Dr. Steinhauer would like to see more research carried out to determine what specific factors can be used to predict success and failure in foster home placement. In the meantime, he suggests that some children, for instance those who cannot handle frustration or cannot delay exploding, who cannot form relationships, or who are considered hyperactive, should be excluded from consideration for foster care.

To sum up then, in general, what literature there is provides only clues as to which situations to avoid, which are risky and which might be more favourable. In spite of some general rules and practice wisdom (which could be merely bias), the task of matching a child with a placement resource, be it foster home, group home or institution, is a complex one in need of refinement.

Conclusions for Discussion

- o That, if a child must be placed, a suitable placement should be determined on the basis of a child's needs, as defined by an adequate assessment. Then, if the child or adolescent has needs which are best met in a family setting, he or she should be placed in a foster home rather than an institution in order to provide the most nearly normal, least differentiating and most integrating substitute care possible.
- o That wherever possible, emergency placements should be avoided, as they do not allow time for adequate selection of an appropriate resource or for the proper preparation of the child and that placement resource.
- o That the whole matter of matching of children and resource be considered as a research question and dealt with as such.
- o That, because of its value to those children who can benefit from a normalizing experience, foster care be given an enhanced, long-range, comprehensive, co-ordinated, system-wide priority.

- o That continued emphasis be placed on accepted good practice in regard to:
 - preparation of child for the placement
 - preparation of foster parents for the placement
 - provision of complete information to foster parents (with guidelines if needed)
 - pre-placement visits.
- o That any monitoring mechanism and operational reviews include the above elements of good practice within their purvey in order to encourage such practices, identify problem situations and support remedial efforts.

6. ROLE AND STATUS OF FOSTER PARENTS

The literature on foster care reflects the wide variations and ambiguities in the perception of the role of foster parents. The professionalization of the role and the use of contracts and provisions for granting some form of guardianship to foster parents are the topics that are now receiving most attention in the literature. Thus, rather than provide a separate review of the literature, this chapter will reflect the literature in the discussion of the topics that involve the role and status of foster parents.

Role of Foster Parents

Wolins (1963) found that perceptions about the role of foster parents were unclear and differed, depending on which party's perceptions were reflected. Of foster parents interviewed, 77 percent compared themselves to the child's parent or to an adoptive parent and 19 percent placed themselves in the role of a relative. The community representatives were most similar to foster parent perceptions. However, of the social workers interviewed, only one-third considered the foster parents' role a parenting one and then most like that of a child's adopting parent. Another third consider the foster parent role unique and the remainder of their responses were divided. Based on these findings Wolins observed that foster parents who are unable to tolerate role confusion may find it easier to quit the role.

Rosenblum (1977) in her research on adolescents in foster care in the Hamilton area found that differences in role perceptions were still very prevalent. Foster parents were asked to compare their role to that of the natural parents. Only 31 percent saw the roles as very different. This viewpoint was most common among new and young foster parents. Again, the implication arises that ambiguity and differences in role perception become factors leading to turnover of foster parents.

In a review of foster parents who had discontinued fostering, those who saw a role difference stopped fostering at a much lower rate than others. With regard to perceptions about fostering in general, fully 80 percent of social workers and only 30 percent of foster parents felt that fostering should be thought of as a profession. In addition, foster parents saw social workers as playing a less prominent role than was perceived by social workers.

There appear to be two approaches to the role of the foster parent and the role of the child's worker. The traditional approach sees the worker as the significant person who makes the major decisions in regard to the foster child, works with the child directly to resolve the child's difficulties, and while allowing day-to-day management to the foster parent, tends to view the foster parent as working under their direction. Presumably this view is most likely to treat, if not view, the foster parents as clients which Rosemblum's (1977) research showed was disliked by foster parents who saw it as a failure by workers to respect their contribution.

Presumably this approach is most commonly assumed with regular foster homes, especially inexperienced homes. It may also help explain why new foster homes were withdrawing at a faster rate than older, more experienced foster parents (Rosenblum, 1977).

The other approach considers the foster parents as the primary helping force, with the role of the child's worker being more supportive and consultative. This represents more of a collegial approach and is most clearly reflected in the relationships and expectations regarding treatment or career foster homes. That this may be more satisfactory to foster parents is supported by the Toronto Catholic experience which has seen a much lower turnover from their special than from their regular foster homes, according to Mrs. W. Koneri, Director of the Foster Care Resources Division.

The approach taken also tends to determine how discontinuities in relationships are prioritized. Where the workers' role is given primacy, the child's worker tends to remain with a child through whatever series of placements may occur. The bonding and identification is presumed to be with the worker. This has a number of implications. For example, if a foster home has several foster children, it may have to deal with a number of different workers at the same time. There may be a tendency for the worker to side with the child against the foster parent, especially since the worker may be relating directly and separately with the child. If anything, this may be characterized as the traditional casework approach which can be readily seen (in its extremes) as a divisive force.

The alternative approach recognizes that foster parents are in contact with the child for much longer periods of time and, based on a family approach to fostering, expects that much of the change in a child's life will come about because of the foster parents. It is also concerned about setting up a triangle of child, foster parents and worker with the possibility of alliances, power struggles and related issues. In a world in which both workers and foster parents come and go, it opts for foster parents as representing more stability and continuity. Consequently discontinuity in relationship between worker and child is accepted as less important. This usually means that the child is not seen separately from the foster family and it implies that problems in relationship between the child and foster parents must be identified and dealt with within the family context. The worker intervenes at the family system level and therefore does not compete with the foster parents. Such an approach calls for a worker who is both comfortable and skilled in working with small groups. It does create difficulty where there are concerns about the functioning of the foster parents, especially where the foster child is passive and withdrawn.

At this stage it is unknown how individual PACO offices or Societies perceive the role of their foster parents and workers assigned to the children in care. Possibly there is no really satisfactory overall answer to which relationship should have priority -- both are of great importance to a child, though depending on individual circumstances, one relationship could be seen as more important at a given point in time. The issue obviously highlights the importance of continuity for a child and the fact that transfers, be they from one foster home to another or from one worker to another, should be handled thoughtfully and sensitively to keep the emotional impact to a minimum. Regardless of how the relationship priorities are weighed, preference should be given to the view that the placement of a child into a foster home creates a new group. It is this group which should generally receive primary attention rather than the individuals within it. This approach sees the worker's role as being supportive and consultative to the foster home and the foster child.

In conclusion, it is recommended that a consultative process be used to more clearly define the role of foster parents. Preference and encouragement should be given to an approach that emphasizes the role of the foster parents in the care of children and sees the role of workers as supportive and consultative to the foster parents.

Career Opportunities

The question of career opportunities in foster care clearly relates to both roles and status. In view of Rosenblum's findings about the difference in attitude toward this question (i.e., 80 percent of social workers and only 30 percent of foster parents saw foster care as a career), it is important that any career developments do not undermine or slight foster parents who are not interested in career opportunities.

The possibility of a career ladder needs to be explored with agencies and foster parents. In the discussion on a continuum of foster care it was suggested that regular foster care continue to represent the voluntary stream. The special foster home was seen as definitely belonging to the career stream, with supplementary rate foster care being a midground. For example, the accident of placement may determine that a regular foster home becomes one with a supplementary rate. On the other hand, becoming a foster home with a supplementary rate may be a first step in a career approach.

The parent-therapist program at Chedoke uses the concept of two categories of homes with those at the second level being involved in such activities as supervising less experienced parent-therapists. However, the concept of career opportunities should be considered not only as a vertical scale but also as a horizontal movement. For example, the use of foster homes as a back-up for other homes, for vacation or parental relief are all horizontal career opportunities.

Some foster parents may no longer want the stress and work of a placement, however, their experience and knowledge may be used and recognized in other ways. They could be used to provide emotional support to other foster parents, especially new ones. This could be an extension of the network concept with a "buddy" variation. They could also remain actively involved as "grandparents" to some foster children. Depending on preference and skill, they could also continue to assist the agency with recruitment, orientation or training tasks.

Consequently, it is recommended that career opportunities, both vertical and horizontal, be developed in conjunction with agencies and foster parent associations as a way of retaining the active involvement of as wide a spectrum of foster parents as possible.

The Concept of Foster Guardianship

The American literature is beginning to devote considerable space to the concept of a form of guardianship vested in foster parents. Most frequently this takes the form of giving the foster parents the right to challenge the decision of the agency to remove a foster child after a specified length of time.

This concept has been seen as a way of ensuring placement continuity in the face of what might be labelled as insensitive agency decisions to move a child. It is also seen as recognizing the bonding that has taken place and so enables priority to be given to the psychological parent over the natural parent or the agency's guardianship rights.

If the existing roles of foster parents lack clarity, the concept of limited guardianship certainly compounds the issues and role relationships of the various parties. The American developments are too recent to have worked out some of the complex relationships. In addition, the American legal approach to foster care isn't completely comparable (e.g., lack of time limit on temporary care) and this adds to the complexity of comparisons.

Nonetheless, if one accepts that bonding may take place between a foster child and a foster family, it is sound social policy to try to recognize this fact in some way. The new provision in the revised Child Welfare Act for subsidized adoptions is an obvious recognition that it is better to subsidize foster parents to adopt their foster child than it is to uproot the child through placement for adoption with another couple. At another level, it is possible that bonding has taken place but, for a variety of reasons, the child or the foster parents or both may not want to formalize this bond by adoption. Consequently, a concept of foster guardianship could provide for a formal expression of social approval and recognition of that bond and the reality that a new family grouping has been formed.

Therefore, it is suggested that a concept of foster guardianship be developed. Some of its characteristics would be:

- o It would recognize the bonding that has taken place between a child and the foster family. The goal would be the creation of a long-term family relationship for the child.
- o It would be restricted to crown ward situations as these represent the more complete break between child and biological parents.
- o It would be a voluntary action requiring the consent of both the foster child and foster family (all children over seven would be required to consent, parallel to the situation in adoptions).
- o Formal court approval would be required. Thereafter, the agency could not remove the foster child without court approval. Similarly, the foster parents and foster child would have to receive court approval to withdraw the guardianship duty.
- o It would result in greatly reduced agency supervision. While the foster parents would continue to receive regular maintenance payments, agency supervisory visits would be reduced to an agreed upon schedule. In any case, a minimum frequency should be specified (for example, an annual visit similar to the requirements in the income maintenance field) and more frequently only at the request of the principals or a complaint referral.

While any proposal for foster guardianship needs to receive careful consideration, one of the questions is whether to apply the concept equally to foster care in child welfare and juvenile corrections. In juvenile corrections a child becomes a crown ward because of the commission of an offence that may have no reference to the relationship between the child and the parents. Consequently, from at least that perspective, it may not be as appropriate in such cases as in child welfare where the child more typically becomes a crown ward because of parental neglect.

In conclusion, it is recommended that the concept of limited guardianship vested in foster placements be explored for further action.

Foster Parents and Decision-Making Authority

The extent to which foster parents have decision-making authority over their foster child is very much connected with the confused picture on the role of foster parents. For example, foster parents are usually pictured as making the day-to-day decisions in regard to children in their care; however, these decisions are expected to fit within the agency's plan for the child and the agency's policies in regard to child care. While on the surface this appears to be a reasonable division of authority, it does leave room for many disagreements over interpretation at points where the various perspectives intermesh.

Two types of decisions may be the most contentious. Many of the foster parents in child welfare would like to have the authority to sign medical releases instead of requiring a social worker to sign on behalf of the Society. However, the right to sign is part of the wardship authority that is given to the Society under The Child Welfare Act, and medical procedures legislation cannot be delegated to foster parents.

The other issue is the question of what discipline may be used with a foster child. If the foster family at times relies on corporal punishment, the fact that the foster child must not receive such punishment changes the lifestyle of the foster home and identifies the foster child as different. For many of the foster parents who may rely on corporal punishment from time to time, the issue isn't so much doing away with that one method of discipline but what substitute can be used.

The Alberta Committee on Child Foster Care (1972) recommended that foster parents' decision-making authority be extended so that it resembles that of natural parents with regard to holidays, and similar matters. They also recommended that foster parents be given the right to make decisions in regard to the hospitalization of children. Though they did recognize that exceptional cases might arise, the presumption would be in favor of foster parents.

This leaves unresolved the issue of liability in case of a tragedy and whether foster parents really wish to accept that responsibility. It also leaves unanswered how legislation, such as The Child Welfare Act, would or should provide such authority to foster parents. It may also require amendments to other pieces of legislation which presently are not that clear on this question.

Rather than legislative change, a number of other alternatives could be attempted. These include:

- o the use of contracts which would express more specifically and clearly mutual expectations, roles, powers and decision making authorities
- o the involvement of foster parents in major decisions and all case conferences pertaining to a child. With a clearer sense of direction and with this degree of involvement in the planning activity most foster parents would have a better idea on how their day to day decisions fit within the total plan.
- o workshops involving foster parents, their association, and agency representatives in discussions of roles and expectations
- o the development of a core curriculum that deals with these issues and that would be available to all organizations that use foster care
- o the provision that foster parents have the right of access to the agency's home study report and all evaluations. This move should encourage treating foster parents as colleagues and hopefully would result in mutual discussions about problem areas or agency reservations that presently may appear on file but have not been shared with the foster parent.
- o foster parent associations can be used to help foster parents to define their roles and to identify problems and issues that need to be resolved on a system, rather than individual basis.

Conclusion for Discussion

- o That agencies use a range of approaches including those described, to clarify foster parent decision-making authority with the aim of enhancing the role and status of foster parents.

7. SUPPORT SERVICES

Casework Services

The provision of casework services to the foster child and foster parent has long been considered the major and most important support service. Ironically, the major and most important source of support may also be a major source of irritation, conflict and dissatisfaction for foster parents. Since the essence of this service is based on a relationship, the quality of that relationship is all important. Consequently, it is appropriate to consider this aspect first and to see what changes should be proposed.

The qualifications and experience of the workers assigned to work with foster parents are most important. It has long been recognized that the combination of being young, single, and inexperienced results in workers who are frequently of little help to foster parents. The 1971 Metro CAS Task Force on Foster Care recognized this as "probably one of the chief weaknesses in our foster care service". Certainly this role should not be seen as a training ground for neophyte workers. With the increase in seriously disturbed teenagers in care, a high level of skill and knowledge is needed. The use of recent graduates from professional schools may initially be a limited improvement. Foster parents over the years have complained about excessive theoretical or bookish philosophizing but lack of practical suggestions.

With the development of foster care networks, and the use of experienced foster parents as supports to new foster parents, the contribution of the child's worker could be allowed to shift, according to Dr. Steinhauer. Practical suggestions on child management and emotional support could be seen as coming more from senior foster colleagues than from workers. The workers, in turn, would be involved in the child's behaviour, including how the child may respond to separation. The significance of the natural family, the tendency for the child to displace onto foster parents feelings about the biological parents, how to handle the child's reaction to visits with his or her own parents - all need to be related to the child's present problems and behaviours. These matters, together with joint overall and long-term planning would become more clearly the responsibilities and contributions of the child's worker in support of a placement.

The philosophical orientation of workers in relation to foster parents is also of importance. Included in this is the worker's perception of the role of the foster parent. Research dealing with this area repeatedly indicates that workers and foster parents see their respective roles quite differently. Therefore, any workers assigned to foster care should receive, just as foster parents do, basic orientation instruction about the various roles and how the worker should discharge his/her responsibilities. This orientation should include some foster parents.

The turnover of workers creates a discontinuity not only for the foster child but also for the foster parents. Consequently, policies that reduce or minimize worker turnover are indirectly supportive of foster parents.

In the background section of this paper it was noted that in Child Welfare and Probation and After Care there is no "caseload count" for foster parents. It has been argued that to give a caseload count or weight to the foster parents and to the foster child is a form of duplication. While this is partly true, it would however recognize the foster parents and the foster child as separate entities who have different needs and who make different demands on their social worker. As noted before, by denying a caseload count to approved foster parents, Societies are unable to receive recognition for the various individual and group activities that are necessary to develop and to maintain foster care programs and foster parents. The qualifications, experience and turnover of social workers are factors largely beyond the Ministry's control. However, giving a caseload count or weight to approved foster homes, would provide a way of protecting foster care workloads and assigning a higher priority to these support activities. What the actual weight should be (i.e., the count of one case or some fraction of a case) should only be made after further research. As noted before, there are significant anomalies in how the caseload factor has affected Societies, and so this change needs to be implemented in a way that doesn't add to the discrepancies but may in fact reduce them.

Other Placement Supports

The service principle that should operate here is that the placement should be supported to provide maximum continuity for the child.

The worker is not always readily available at the time of a crisis. Thus the extended family concept now in use in the Thunder Bay area seems an apt adaptation, especially for the more remote communities. This application of the network concept should be encouraged and supported.

The next line of defense might be the use of week-end or crisis relief. These arrangements could serve several purposes from providing a "cooling-off" period for all parties, relief from the day-to-day stress of the placement, to holding a placement together until it is possible to make a planned, orderly move to a new placement.

Two other types of placement support are mentioned from time to time but both require a high degree of skill and sensitivity to be successful.

The first type recognizes that a new family unit is created by the foster placement and may result in interpersonal difficulties. It notes that the agency created the problems for the family unit, which if unresolved could undermine the placement, and so it argues the agency should help the family unit to resolve the identified problems. A suggested approach is the family therapy model of help. Unfortunately, this casts the foster family into the role of clients, which they may find quite unsatisfactory. An alternative is to work within a collegial and consultative (i.e. information giving) context which however may be difficult, very subtle to put into practice, and may be perceived as not dealing with the basic relationship questions. At this stage, there do not appear to be any easy answers to this issue. Possibly one alternative is to negotiate an individual approach with the foster parents and to reflect this in any contract that may be used.

The second type of placement support involves the introduction of a resident child care worker into the foster home. The worker might become part of the foster home for varying periods and for varying purposes. For example, one form of parental relief may be offered, allowing the child to leave the home under the supervision of the child care worker. This approach may also involve teaching specific child management skills or techniques and modelling those skills for the foster parent. Finally, it could be used to help foster parents to cope with a difficult placement on a crisis basis or until another placement can be planned and orchestrated. It is important that this help be provided without taking over or undermining the role of the foster parents. Consequently, it requires not only sensitivity and skill but also foster parents able to carry their role in such a complicated process.

Parental Relief Arrangements

These arrangements may vary from "babysitting" assistance to help with homemaker arrangements during an emergency or illness of the foster parents.

The OACAS Survey 1978 indicated that 26 Societies presently provide payments to foster parents for babysitting arrangements. The possibility of such help is especially significant for foster parents caring for handicapped or bedridden children. At the same time, even with teenage foster children, it may not always be wise to leave them in a home without adults. Therefore, unless the agency can and does help with such arrangements, the foster parents may find it very difficult to get away from a stressful placement.

The possibility of weekend relief or substitution has already been noted. The 1978 survey reported that 23 Societies are presently involved in making such arrangements with and for their foster parents.

The possibility of holiday relief may be more controversial since the norm is that families take holidays together. However in case of very stressful placements and teenagers, the norm may not be appropriate. The survey makes no mention of holiday relief for foster parents, though it notes that 39 Societies provide vacation rates for the foster child. This presumably means the same thing as the former but the focus is on the child.

The OACAS Survey (supported by the Child Welfare Field Surveys) indicated that illness of the foster parents was the third most frequently cited reason for discontinuing fostering. On that basis, assistance with homemakers during an emergency or serious illness should help to maintain placements. It is suggested that a flexible approach be taken in these matters in regard to the extent that the cost of such services is absorbed by the foster child's agency. A fair approach would seem to be to cost share on an equal basis with other children in the household. However, in unusual circumstances it may be necessary to pay a higher share as a means of ensuring placement continuity.

The same surveys showed that some foster parents quit the program because they were "burnt out" or wanted a rest. Some foster parents would do well to take a short break between difficult placements. However, where the child's maintenance payments are an important source of income, the family may not be able to afford such a rest break. Rather than take a rest, the family may very shortly accept another child (the pressure for placements also encourages agencies to overload foster parents in this way) or the foster mother may decide to look for outside employment. The possibility of paying a retainer fee to some foster homes as a way of encouraging a rest break needs to be investigated. In addition, the implications of such a policy needs to be explored with the field.

Managing Contact With Natural Parents

Visiting between children in care and natural families is becoming much more common, but it continues to have the potential to be a painful and stressful event. The stage managing of the various roles involved in access arrangements is a very sensitive matter that often requires a high degree of skill and patience. Consequently, the child, natural parents and foster parents may all need considerable help especially in the initial phases. In addition, foster parents may need further help in dealing with the child's reaction to the visits.

In British Columbia some of the offices of the Ministry of Human Resources have tried to support and encourage such activities by a variety of means. Natural Parent Groups have been formed, with one aim being to help keep contact with their children in care and with foster parents as positive as possible. Aside from the group programs, natural parents with children in foster care are linked by a newsletter as a means to encourage their support and participation in the foster placement of their children. Another means employed is to have a natural parent act as a resource person in ongoing courses on fostering, which in turn have a segment on this matter.

One of the expectations of special foster homes is that they will be able to provide an individualized treatment or remediation program on behalf of the child in their home. Contact or work with natural parents may be an important aspect of such corrective efforts with the child.

Foster Parents Associations

The Associations of Foster Parents have become a support group to foster parents. They act as an information exchange, a channel of communication with the CAS and may also act as an advocate on behalf of individual members or the program as a whole. In addition, they assist the Societies in such matters as recruitment, orientation activities and the review of problems arising in the care of foster children.

In view of this it is recommended that the important role of foster parents' associations be recognized and supported by agencies at the local level and at the provincial level by the Ministry of Community and Social Services. Agencies could do this by:

- o involving their association in reviewing policies related to foster care
- o involving them in such matters as recruitment, orientation and development activities.

The Province could:

- o inform and consult associations in regard to legislative changes relative to foster care
- o involve them in the development of foster care standards and guidelines
- o provide grants in support of the bi-annual meeting of foster parents.

Conclusions for Discussion

- o That a caseload factor or weight be given to approved foster homes as a way of providing additional staff time to foster care programming. The actual assignment of weights should be determined by a detailed study and recommendation on the matter.
- o That agencies with foster parents be encouraged to develop a range of placement supports and approaches.
- o That all agencies with foster care be encouraged to develop a range of parental relief arrangements.
- o That increased recognition be given to the demands placed on foster parents as a result of visits between natural parents and foster children. Sensitive help, coaching and training sessions should be provided to assist foster parents to successfully manage what can be a difficult event.

8. COMPENSATION

Rates as a Factor in Recruitment, Retention of Homes

There are conflicting views on the relationship between the level of foster care payments and the number of foster homes available. A 1970 Child Welfare League of America study (Grow and Smith) found that over one-half of the agencies surveyed considered their rates to be high enough to recruit and to retain foster parents, while many agencies believed there was no relationship between board rates and recruitment.

Other research does not support the latter perceptions. Simon (1975) compared the number of foster family homes per capita in various states and the corresponding payment levels in these states. The research sought to estimate the effect of the payment levels on the supply of homes. It found a positive relationship between an increase in payment level and a comparable increase in the supply of homes.

The experience of the Toronto Catholic CAS, already noted, appears to bear this out. While it is not possible for them to isolate the impact of board rates alone, they have recently been able to improve their recruitment and retention of foster homes after significantly increasing their rates in 1975 to make them the leading rates in Ontario at that time.

The Rosenblum study (1977) also considered the influence of the level of boarding rates on recruitment and retention of foster homes. One of the findings of that study was that foster parents give a low ranking to payments as a motivation for fostering. However, another finding was that foster parents with yearly incomes of less than \$15,000 attributed more importance to adding to their family income through fostering than those with yearly incomes of over \$15,000. On that basis the researcher concluded that steps should be taken to ensure that fostering remains economically viable for those with modest family incomes. Presumably, this means ensuring that the rate level is not so low that it deters foster parent recruitment in the first place, nor subsequently so low that the expense of caring for adolescents forces foster parents out of the program. Within these stipulations, it appears that the desired rate level is one that at least covers foster parents' costs.

Of course any discussion of rates is likely to raise the issue of motivation. It might be assumed that in a volunteer service such as the foster care of children of strangers, foster families are somewhat atypical and the money is a neutral factor. Research by Frederick Herzberg (Motivation - hygiene theory, 1966) may provide an additional insight despite the fact that Herzberg tested the levels of motivation, job satisfaction and productivity of engineers and accountants rather than volunteers. He found that the level of these factors was associated with the level of pay in a somewhat surprising manner:

- o Though traditionally considered motivators, such matters as pay, supplemental benefits, company policy and administration, kind of supervision, working conditions and several other matters were found to be far more significant as dissatisfiers. Consequently, their improvement does not result in higher motivation, but their deterioration does result in dissatisfaction.
- o Motivators, for the most part are matters such as achievement and recognition, usually associated with the self-actualization of the individual on the job.

Consideration of such factors as self-actualization, achievement and recognition calls to mind Abraham H. Maslow's theory (Motivation and Personality, 1954) that a hierarchy of needs exists and that people are motivated to satisfy these needs in a set order, moving from basic survival towards self-development. Maslow theorizes that only after people have satisfied their physiological needs, safety needs, and experienced "belongingness and love" are they motivated to seek esteem and, ultimately, self-actualization.

Applying these theories in a very general sense to foster care, Maslow's theory appears to qualify Herzberg's theory -- at least in relation to low income families. For these families, presumably struggling for economic survival, money may indeed be a motivator. A rate which comfortably covers out-of-pocket expenses for a family in a middle class milieu may represent a significant addition to marginal income families. This may make them an exception to Herzberg's theory that pay is primarily a dissatisfier. Maslow's theory that people are motivated by opportunities for achievement and recognition would apply to people who are not preoccupied with economic survival and who would want more than monetary satisfaction from fostering.

For the majority of these families who are self-sufficient, the level of foster payments may be a weak motivator, but a low level may be a stronger factor in deciding against proceeding with an application (Toronto CAS conclusion as reported in the Globe and Mail). Once part of the foster care system, the rates should seem fair and equitable within the foster care field if an agency is to avoid creating dissatisfaction over rates. If the rates are perceived as unfair or inequitable, they may quickly become, by displacement, the focus for other more vague, intangible frustrations. However, if the rates are seen as fair and appropriate, they will not become a focal point for dissatisfactions and withdrawal from the field.

If one applies this theory to the current situation, it is obvious that foster parents' awareness of the great variation in board rates results in a strong sense of dissatisfaction. The vagueness or lack of any rational basis for the variety of foster parent rates adds to the feeling that the system is unfair and exploitive. If the Herzberg approach is accepted, it also highlights the importance of fairness and internal consistency in any scheme of supplementary or special foster care. Foster parents must be able to see and agree that there is a difference in the skill and care required to justify any supplementary rates. If not, the extensive introduction of such an approach will result in greater dissatisfaction and withdrawal from foster care.

This raises the question of a uniform provincial rate or whether regional rates should be used. The factors used in setting the various rates will indicate what choice should be made. For example, if food costs are higher in Northern Ontario than in other parts of Ontario, fairness indicates that a regional rate should be used unless the difference in cost is offset by other factors.

Once rates have been adjusted, Societies will be better able to assess complaints from foster parents. If complaints are reduced, then rate levels and inequities probably were largely responsible for dissatisfaction. If complaints and withdrawals continue, however, Societies can look at factors other than compensation and may conclude that rates were "scapegoated" as the villain, but the real problem may lie in lack of satisfaction for the foster parent in terms of achievement and recognition, etc.

The Existing Maze of Foster Care Rates

A brief outline of existing practices in establishing rates reveals how badly this aspect of fostering needs rationalization. Even within separate sectors of the field, rates vary widely and categories of foster care are not clearly delineated.

In the child welfare sector, the 1978 OACAS Survey reported 40 different rates for infant care, ranging from \$95.00 to \$172.05 per month--a difference of \$77.05 per month. Even where two Societies served the same area and one would have expected similar rates; this was not the case in practice. In addition, there appears to be little correlation between rates used by geographically neighbouring Societies.

Regular rates for teenagers vary not only across Societies, but also between Society foster homes and foster homes used by juvenile corrections. In the child welfare sector, we again find 40 different rates ranging from \$130.00 to \$240.25 per month for a difference of \$110.25 per month. These rates are more widely dispersed between the two extremes than were those for infants, and again there is no regional consistency. Regular foster homes receive this basic rate for "board" although the term is not specifically defined, and most Societies then pay an additional spending allowance and a special seasonal allowance depending on the child's age, and provide a clothing allowance or reimburse the foster parents. Neither the amounts nor the way of handling these items is consistent from Society to Society.

To further complicate the Province's and the Societies' budget estimates, only about half of the Societies implement rate changes at the first of the year, while many introduce revised rates in mid-year, necessitating retroactive allocations in the following fiscal year.

Since wards in the juvenile corrections system are basically all teenagers, there is no need to consider age differentials as in child welfare. The regular rate for each ward is \$7.00 per day (\$10.00 in Toronto) or \$210.00 per month (\$300.00 in Toronto). This rate was established June 1, 1974 and has remained unchanged since then. It should be noted that from this per diem rate, foster parents must provide \$3.00 per week student allowance, plus clothing expenses at a rate of \$20.00 per month. Major clothing bills, educational, medical and dental expenses are reimbursed separately. However, damage to property, losses, breakage, telephone bills, theft or other expenses resulting from the action of wards are not reimbursed.

Rates and suggested revisions to the so-called "Foster Allowances" paid under Family Benefits and General Welfare Assistance have already been noted on page 25.

The provision of special board rates in both child welfare and juvenile corrections compounds the inconsistencies. Without an explicit policy, workers may be subjective about what constitutes special needs and/or the ability of the foster parent to meet those needs - especially, perhaps, if reimbursement could make the difference between retaining or losing a good foster home. Special rates are now usually paid in addition to the basic or maintenance rates, but the basis for determining these rates, as well as the rates themselves, vary throughout the foster care field. While an attempt is often made to determine rates according to the degree of difficulty of managing the child, there appear to be no provisions across the field to ensure that children of equal difficulty are placed at the same rate.

The Approved Home Program for retarded persons able to move into the community from Schedule I and II facilities, is a foster care program with rates presently set by the Developmental Resources Division at \$10.70 per day or \$321.00 per month for meals and lodging. In addition, costs of clothing and personal comfort allowances are paid through the institutions' budgets.

Aside from the addition of special rates to the regular board rates, there is another foster home designation -- that of treatment home. In many cases, this appears to refer to a further degree of difficulty in managing a child and results in an increased special rate of compensation to the foster parents. For instance, the CAS-Thistletown Family Care Program is funded the same as the Society's special foster homes. In view of the difficulty in consistently distinguishing special needs from treatment, and in view of the concept proposed in this paper of a continuum of foster care, this largely monetary distinction could be dropped in future and all such increments be considered "supplementary rates".

The term "treatment rate" could then be applied to that kind of foster care where the foster parent is salaried, trained and expected to provide a specific kind of care for the child. The parent-therapist project of Chedoke is one example of treatment foster care, and the Alberta Parent-Counsellor Program is another.

At Chedoke, a basic non-taxable maintenance allowance is paid for having one or more children in the foster home. Board and clothing rates and pocket money are then paid according to the age category of the child and range from \$165 to \$180 per month. In addition, the foster parents are paid a taxable salary as part-time employees of the hospital. The current starting level is \$98 per person per month (\$196 per couple) and ranges incrementally upward through five levels in the first category and two levels in the second category of parent-therapist to \$246 per person per month.

In Alberta, the Parent-Counsellor project, started in June, 1974, paid a per diem of \$17.25 by 1976. For 1977-78 the following breakdown of this rate was proposed:

Starting Salary: \$130.00 per person per month; per couple	\$260.00
Basic Maintenance (non-taxable) to cover a portion of household expenses, parent relief, wear and tear, etc.	140.00
Per diem @ 4.40 for spending allowance, clothing, food	<u>136.00</u>
	<u>\$536.00</u>

In addition, an initial placement grant of \$225 for clothing and school supplies was proposed. These figures were later revised upwards but the actual expenditures are unknown.

Developing a Formula for Regular Foster Care Rates

There are basically two issues in setting regular foster care rates:

- o what cost elements are to be accepted for cost determination, and,
- o how those cost elements are to be established.

The Child Welfare League of America, in its standards, recommends that the base rates include a prorated share of food, clothing, housing, utilities, telephone, replacement of household items, cleaning, laundry, personal medical supplies, liability insurance, family recreational and educational activities. They recommend that the rates be renewed on the basis of cost of living guidelines.

The "Halton Rates" developed in 1973 sought to establish the actual costs of caring for children as the basis for their 1974 board rates. They recommended an age-based rate which included the following cost elements:

- o Food - based on the Visiting Homemakers Association Guide (Toronto based).
- o Shelter - To determine this cost the welfare rate was considered, as well as boarding home rates and the minimum rate of a second class hotel. An allocated rate was accepted which just exceeded the welfare rate. The shelter rate was expected to include the cost of providing bedding, furniture, a normal amount of washing, utilities, etc.
- o Incidentals - included the cost of items like hair cuts, personal care supplies, cleaning and repairing of clothes, etc. The actual cost of these items as reported in the Canada Year Book was used to determine the amount for this element.
- o Transportation - An arbitrary number of two weekly trips on the public transportation system was used to determine the transportation allowance (for recreational purposes, music lessons, etc.). Foster parents were able to charge mileage for extra transportation costs.
- o Entertainment - It was decided to allow the cost of admission for two outings per month per child.

The traditional and most common philosophical assumption is that regular foster care rates should cover the out-of-pocket, or basic maintenance costs of caring for the foster child. In other words, it assumes that becoming a foster parent should not result in any financial cost to the foster parents and, conversely, they should not realize any financial gain by it.

If this approach is applied to food costs, presumably it should be possible to measure how these costs vary by family size and age of child. Both the Visiting Homemakers Association Guide for Toronto and the federal cost-of-living index provide some indicators. However, food costs can vary greatly, depending on the family income level and geographic location within Ontario. Therefore additional research will be needed to identify these variations. Consideration will have to be given to whether individual or regional rates are the most equitable to foster parents. It should be noted that foster parent rates do not presently vary for teenage boys or girls, whereas studies on expenditure patterns indicate that it is much more costly to feed an adolescent boy than a similar-aged girl. In addition, as many foster parents have noted, some children may consume an inordinate amount of food. Whether any adjustment should be made for such situations should probably be considered within any supplementary rate scheme rather than with the regular rates.

Rates for shelter and related expenditures may be more controversial and difficult to establish. To use a prorated share of housing, utilities, telephone and related expenditures as recommended by the Child Welfare League of America would mean that foster parents would be able to use their service to subsidize rental or mortgage payments. This would be contrary to the "out-of-pocket expense rule" since the rent or mortgage would not normally be increased because of any foster care activity. Consequently, such a level of payment could be seen as a "windfall" for foster parents.

It has been suggested that many foster parents could rent out a room or so and therefore the foster care rate should include a shelter allocation to make up for this loss of rental. This again raises the question of level of return -- out-of-pocket or a profit -- as implied by a rental equivalency.

Rather than a prorated share, or rental equivalency, it is suggested that an incremental cost approach be used for shelter and related expenditures. This means that only the added costs arising from looking after a foster child would become part of the basic foster care rate.

The cost of recreation and entertainment will again vary by the living standard and lifestyle of a home. How to strike a reasonably equitable rate for these expenditures is a complex matter. To deal with these on a direct expenditure basis may be the most equitable method for the foster parents but could result in charges that some foster children are being discriminated against while others are not subjected to any marked limits. Consequently, in fairness to foster children and foster parents, the concept of a range of expenditures may need to be developed.

In trying to develop a foster care rate related to a concept of reimbursing for actual expenditures, it should be noted this will not resolve the present complaint that foster parents receive one rate for a child but if the child is then placed in a group home, or institution, the per diem cost is multiplied. As a result, some foster parents have expressed the feeling that they have been grossly underpaid and possibly even exploited. This overlooks the fact that the regular foster care rate does not provide any reimbursement for the foster parents' services, whereas a large part of the group home per diem is staff costs. In effect, such a comparison seeks to equate a voluntary system and a business operation which has to recover all its costs if it is to survive. To meet this complaint by increasing foster parent rates beyond their basic maintenance costs involves changing the system from a voluntary to a business basis. The purpose of this analysis is not to go into the arguments for and against such a change, but to clearly identify the difference in philosophy, and thereby to ensure that any debate about the issue does not confuse or equate the two service systems.

Consideration for Supplementary Foster Care Rates

Supplementary foster care rates are now usually paid in addition to the basic or maintenance rate. The basis for determining these rates, as well as the rates themselves, vary throughout the foster care field. Consequently, the first step will be to get a detailed picture of the basis for special rates and how these are determined and implemented. Thereafter, developmental work should be undertaken to arrive at a general philosophical approach and uniform rates within a region or on a provincial basis.

The literature has not addressed itself very extensively to the question of special rates. Consequently, it will be necessary to contact provincial and state departments to discover what approaches have been tried or used elsewhere.

Peterson (1974) describes one method which uses three categories:

- o Child - This identifies children with handicaps or conditions primarily physiological rather than behavioural (i.e., retarded, diabetic, physically handicapped).
- o Problem - This is more of a behavioural category (i.e., bedwetting, drug use, truancy, etc.).
- o Service - This considers what the foster parent has to actually do in order to meet the needs of the child.

The amount of the special fee is determined by one or more of the categories, which can be combined or to which a weighting formula can be assigned.

Special Foster Care

The parent-therapist program of Chedoke should be used as the model for this program. Alberta has used the parent-therapist concept for an extensive similar program. Thus Alberta has faced many of the problems that may need to be anticipated. The extensive documentation of their program provides an excellent additional resource for program development.

Income Tax Policy

After the basis and level of compensation rates have been developed, it is recommended that these be cleared with Revenue Canada so that everyone is aware of the federal government's policy in regard to the foster payments. The position taken with Revenue Canada should be that:

- o maintenance payments cover the average actual cost to foster parents and so should be tax exempt
- o special foster parent payments are fees for service and so are clearly income.

Supplementary rates may require a special ruling since they may involve service elements.

Another question that has been raised is whether regular foster parents could receive recognition by way of a tax credit for their donated time. In view of all the other changes contemplated by this review, it is suggested that consideration of this question be deferred for the time being.

Conclusions for Discussion Re Supplementary Rates

- o That work be undertaken to determine the existing policies in regard to "special" rates and that this information be used as a basis for the development of a consistent approach to supplementary rates.

Conclusions for Discussion Re Setting Regular Foster Care Rates

- o That foster parents should not be expected to subsidize the direct cost of a foster child's care.
- o That maintenance rates paid to foster parents be age-related using these age groups:
 - 0 to 6.
 - 7 to 12
 - 13 and over (depending on the outcome of expenditures by age, there may need to be another age break at age 16).
- o That the major cost elements of caring for a child be used to determine the maintenance costs.
- o That the major cost elements (food, etc.) be tied wherever possible to objective, external and measurable indices to assist in setting and revising the rates.
- o That equitable rates across the foster care systems be accepted as the goal and that a time frame for achievement of that goal be set when the financial implementation implications are known.
- o That actual expenditure patterns be used to determine such things as food costs.
- o That the allocation for shelter, heat, laundry and related cost elements be based on a concept of the incremental difference in cost attributable to the addition of a foster child to the household.

- o That items which show the greatest variations, such as family recreational activities, be considered for repayment on an actual expenditure basis.

Conclusions for Discussion Re Other Considerations

- o That the experience of the parent-therapist program at Chedoke and the experience of the similar Alberta program be used to develop a comprehensive approach to special foster care or career foster parenting.
- o That foster care maintenance rates, supplementary care rates and special foster care (fee-for-service) rates be cleared with Revenue Canada so that everyone knows how the various incomes relate to income tax reporting requirements.
- o That any future study of foster care rates test both the Herzberg and Maslow theories in relation to the importance and role of foster care rates in recruiting and retaining foster parents.

9. RETENTION POLICIES

The retention of foster parents is affected by the tenor of all their interactions with their agency and related institutions. Thus it is more than fine or fair sounding policies that determine how foster parents view their experiences and whether it is worth their while to continue as foster parents. Therefore, what is needed is a sympathetic policy framework plus a sensitive system that has the flexibility to recognize individual differences and to ensure that individual or group frustrations, or grievances are heard and acted upon.

Review of the Literature

The Cautley and Aldridge (1973) research on why foster parents requested termination of a placement found that it is not possible to predict and identify from their initial characteristics which foster parents may eventually terminate. However, knowing reasons for termination may increase the sensitivity of the system to potentially problematic placements. Some of the reasons identified by Cautley and Aldridge (and quoted in the Self-Assessment Manual) are:

- o the foster mother was uncomfortable with a strange child in the home
- o there was rivalry between the foster parents' own children and the foster child
- o the foster mother had feelings of rejection toward the child
- o the foster parents had unrealistic expectations
- o the foster child was not getting along with the foster parents
- o the foster child had behaviour problems
- o the foster child wanted to leave the home
- o there were hostilities between the natural parents and the foster parents
- o the child was too active for older foster parents
- o the foster parents were unwilling to work with the child's problems.

This list of reasons emphasizes the relationship aspects between the foster child and the foster family. These reasons again underline the importance of the initial assessment of the child's characteristics and knowledge of the foster family. They also underscore the importance of sensitivity and alertness on the part of the worker who is charged with the support service responsibility.

Two studies undertaken in the '60s came up with mutually supporting conclusions as to why placements break down. Both found that prior institutional care correlated significantly with subsequent foster home breakdown. The presence in the home of children of the same age as the foster children was also highly associated with placement failure (Dinnage and Pringle, 1967, and Parker, 1966).

All of these findings assume that placement failures may result in the foster parent deciding to withdraw from foster parenting. This need not always follow, though in view of the high rate of turnover (some 25 percent) in foster homes in Ontario each year, it seems reasonable that this may frequently be the case.

Other literature looking at reasons for the loss of homes found:

a) external reasons such as:

- o foster mother returning to work
- o change in family circumstances (e.g., move, birth of child)
- o family problems
- o loss of interest, dissatisfaction

b) internal reasons:

- o inadequate support from worker and agency
- o lack of clear role definitions
- o troublesome or difficult children
- o lack of orientation and training
- o problems with the agency worker

- o problems, frustrations with natural parents
- o inadequate compensations
- o not enough say in decisions affecting the child (e.g., complaints about court decisions returning children to what foster parents consider inadequate homes are common in the child welfare system).

The discussions and recommendations under other parts (role and status, etc.) spell out a variety of approaches that hopefully will act to reverse the present termination trends. It is possible that some of the external reasons proffered above may be rationalizations for the kind of internal reasons just listed. Many of the problems which create internal conflict may be generated by the kinds of problems of children being placed in foster homes today. This points up the need for research to test whether certain types of problems or behaviours are contra-indicators for placement in regular, non-treatment foster homes (and possibly, even in treatment-type foster homes).

Such knowledge would greatly assist in choosing the type of placement, and then in matching the child and the home. The whole issue of avoiding emergency placements in favour of careful matching has been noted elsewhere in this report, but it may be a significant factor in retaining homes. One implication of developing indicators, contra-indicators and matching techniques is that the system will need to build up an inventory of homes so that a choice in placement exists. Consequently, a fair supply of vacant homes will be a necessary and healthy aspect of the system.

The Rosenblum findings (1977) provide some additional relevant observations:

- o when foster parents know other foster parents, they terminate for what were considered more appropriate (objective?) reasons
- o a constructive relationship between the foster parents and social workers is an important incentive to continue.

Finally, a British study by Jones (1975) noted:

- o there was a relationship between the age at recruitment and the length of fostering: older women (over 30) tend to foster longer

- o working class people tend to foster longer (presumably the maintenance payments represent a less marginal percentage of total income)
- o those who began fostering because of their own families' needs frequently ceased because of reasons related to their own families.

Grievance Procedure

Where there are problems in the relationship between the foster parents and the agency worker, or where the foster parents feel their concerns are not heard by their worker, some mechanism needs to be developed to ensure that these issues are dealt with in a fair, open way. Presently, many foster parents feel that if they speak out too strongly they may threaten their worker (especially if inexperienced) or they may be perceived as "trouble makers" and somehow may not be used for further placements. Where the worker and agency are all powerful, it is not surprising that some foster parents may be reluctant to express their point of view too openly or forcefully.

Eventually, it is hoped, a higher priority for foster care along with a commensurate increase in the time a worker can allot to ongoing case support will help to develop a more collaborative relationship. However, as a formal way of redressing difficulties and redefining the balance between foster parent and agencies, a recognized review or grievance mechanism should be developed throughout the whole foster care system. This should be part of the advocacy/grievance provisions to be developed within the total children's services.

The child, also, should have an opportunity to voice grievances although a less elaborate mechanism may be appropriate. However, child advocacy provisions should recognize the family nature and normalization intent of the program and not promote an adversarial stance. Eventually, where the foster parents become "like family", the provision for resorting to a formal grievance procedure could be withdrawn or only used in cases of neglect. This would parallel the concept applied to substitute parents who have guardianship.

Conclusions for Discussion

- o That reasons for foster parents withdrawing should be monitored and researched so that corrective efforts may be appropriate and well informed.
- o That a review or grievance mechanism be developed throughout the whole foster care system.

IV CONCLUSION

Some Final Thoughts

In undertaking this review of foster care in Ontario, it was realized at the onset that our knowledge of present practices and policies was incomplete and fragmented. While a full scale questionnaire and interviews would have overcome this deficiency, it was decided that another large questionnaire at that time would have been inappropriate. Consequently, this review does not identify all of the creative efforts and program activities throughout the Children's Services Division. The development of such a knowledge base will need to be a high priority for the Foster Program Coordinator and is an essential element in the role of providing information linkages.

It is also obvious that a review such as this cannot deal with all the issues and concerns of a service program as big and as varied as foster care. Therefore, as the detailed review of the specific aspects is undertaken, additional problems, complications and questions will surface. Consequently, this review and its recommendations are aimed at providing a sense of direction, some feel for the "lay of the land" but must not be seen as the final or definitive word on foster care.

Research

This review of foster care has repeatedly been faced with the reality that we do not have facts with which to make decisions but that our choice is between competing assumptions. Consequently, there is a need for contemporary descriptive research. This frequently has to be the prelude to research which seeks to identify cause and effect relationships. Some of the topics that could be considered include:

- o How to evaluate public advertising in relation to recruitment success.
- o How to improve recruitment efforts (i.e., reduce ratio of enquiries to approvals).
- o Identification of selection factors used. How do selection factors relate to fostering success?
- o The development of selection aids.
- o How to improve the matching of child and foster home.
- o Monitoring and evaluating which children are subject to repeated placements and why.

- o What degree of disturbance responds to "normalization" efforts and what kinds of problems require remediation?
- o The development and evaluation of alternate fostering models (self-select foster homes, etc.)
- o What constitutes ongoing satisfaction in foster care for foster parents and for foster children?
- o What are the effects of contact with the natural parents and under what circumstances?
- o What are the reasons for turnover of foster homes and what corrective measures have the greatest degree of success?

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SPECIAL BOARD RATES AND PAYMENTS BY SOCIETIES, 1978
(From 1978 OACAS Survey)

<u>SOCIETY</u>	<u>RATES</u>	<u>SPECIAL PAYMENTS</u>
Algoma	Evaluated individual (e.g., M.R., enuretic) from \$232 mo. to \$1,023 mo. for highly disturbed teens in professional home	NO
Brant	0-21 \$164.30-\$279.00 0-18 \$186.00-\$310.00	NO \$10 max. mo. Tooth paste, etc.
Dufferin	not stated and	\$50 max. mo. wear tear, emotional impact on family
Durham	0-2 \$15.50-\$31.00/mo. 2+ \$31.00-\$93.00/mo. above basic	NO
Elgin	Regular Board Rate plus up to \$156 per month discretion- ary. Special treatment home \$372/month/child	Maximum \$100 mo. retainer
Essex	Individual child assessment max. rate per day \$12.01	NO
Essex R.C.	8-12 \$251.72 per mo.	NO
Frontenac	up to \$381.00 per mo.	NO
Grey	6-12 \$310.00 per mo.	NO
Halton	6-11 \$206.15	cost recovery, e.g., babysitting relief
Hamilton	6-11 \$232.50	mileage expense at Provincial rates
Hamilton R.C.	Special rates for specific problems, \$50-\$286 mo. over basic rate	\$25 mo. for parents in group program for travel
Hastings	6-12: up to \$46.50 mo. above regular board rate	6-12: \$5 for incidentals

SPECIAL BOARD RATES AND PAYMENTS BY SOCIETIES, 1978
(From 1978 OACAS Survey) Cont'd

<u>SOCIETY</u>	<u>RATES</u>	<u>SPECIAL PAYMENTS</u>
Huron	According to behavioural problem, average \$248 mo.	NO
Jewish F. & C.S.	not stated	\$10-\$100 mo. children with special needs
Kapuskasing	According to individual demands, \$10-\$100 per mo. in addition to board rates	6-13: \$6.85 special needs
Kawartha	6-12: up to \$277.30 mo. above basic rate	\$2 per day for over two foster children
Kenora	Individually assessed	NO
Kent	According to special needs not age \$7.21 to \$26.50	NO
Lambton	0-15 \$310 mo.	NO
Lanark	\$10-\$35 depending on needs	\$3 max. incidentals
Leeds	According to degree of individual disability	NO
London	\$1.15 per day enuresis mo. \$1.75 moderate care \$3.20 demanding care \$4.65 very demanding care	\$45 or \$60 or \$175 retainer fee for foster receiving home or special foster home
Muskoka	All ages \$251.41-\$372.00	NO
Niagara	\$10-\$35 per mo. depending on problem; \$51.15 per month parental relief; \$310 per month specialized group treatment.	\$35 + Behavioural problems and physical disabilities
Nipissing	According to type of care required not ages	NO

SPECIAL BOARD RATES AND PAYMENTS BY SOCIETIES, 1978
(From OACAS)

<u>SOCIETY</u>	<u>RATES</u>	<u>SPECIAL PAYMENTS</u>
Norfolk	0-18 \$208.94	NO
Northumberland	No fixed rates-all ages to a max. of \$15/day children	As required, especially
Ottawa	According to need from \$10 to \$150 per month over basic rate	NO
Oxford	Special baby and emergency receiving home \$100/mo. subsidy for House. Special home for M.R. \$390.60/month per child	NO
Parry Sound	Maximum \$248 month all ages	\$12 maximum for recreation, music lessons, etc.
Peel	\$10-\$100 mo. based on individual needs in addition to basic rate	NO
Perth	Rate determined by agency and foster parents up to twice basic rate	NO
Porcupine	According to problem \$25 to \$65.00/mo.	NO
Prescott	According to need \$45-\$60 + regular board rates \$248-\$294.50 plus regular board rates	up to \$100/month for special needs
Prince Edward	Retainer fee of \$175 at L.D. Discretion Special Care to \$200 +	\$15/bed to special group home
Rainy River	1 child \$157.48 1 child \$181.97	—
Renfrew	up to \$70 extra to be reviewed every 6 mo.	

SPECIAL BOARD RATES AND PAYMENTS BY SOCIETIES, 1978
(From OACAS) Cont'd

<u>SOCIETY</u>	<u>RATES</u>	<u>SPECIAL PAYMENTS</u>
Simcoe	Evaluated individually max. rate currently paid is \$12.64	NO
Stormont	According to handicap from \$10 to \$97.50 per mo. age not considered	\$230 max for emotionally disturbed, birthdays, etc.
Sudbury	According to individual needs	NO
Timiskaming	According to problems not age \$5.00 to \$46.50 mo. Special foster homes \$8.00 daily retainer	Max. \$248 retained for emergency, long term beds
Thunder Bay	According to problem \$192.40-\$279.85	NO
Toronto	Subsidy paid in addition to basic board rate according to needs	NO
Toronto R.C.	Regular Foster Home rate plus \$103.77 mo.	
Waterloo	\$30-\$300 per mo. according to degree of problem	
Wellington	7-12 \$134.23-\$361.46	\$50-\$60 mo. mileage, babysitting
York	According to individual need, requires individual application	NO

FOSTER CARE: A SELECTED, ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**Table of Contents**

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INTRODUCTION

Appendix B presents some briefly annotated selections from the literature on foster care, as a supplement to the reviews included in the Foster Care Discussion Paper itself. This annotated bibliography is offered as a starting point for anyone wishing to begin a more detailed investigation of some aspect of foster care, and as a resource for agencies with limited library facilities.

Journal articles as well as books have been included in the selection. For convenience, the bibliography has been divided into sections corresponding to headings in the discussion paper. However, where it was difficult to summarize some writings under such specific headings, the books or articles have been included under more than one heading. Articles described in detail in the discussion paper are not included here but are listed in the separate bibliography at the end of the paper.

RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

American Public Welfare Association. Standards for Foster Family Services Systems With Guidelines for Implementation Specifically Related to Public Agencies. American Public Welfare Association, 1975.

Suggests the following as being effective in the recruitment of foster parents:

- o stuffers in monthly billings
- o designated full or part-time staff to act as recruiters on a year-round basis
- o a community recruitment program directed by an advisory committee composed of foster parents, social work staff of public and voluntary agencies.

Child Welfare League of America. Standards for Foster Family Service. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1975.

Suggests that recruitment committees made up of interested citizens and groups be established. They could solicit interested applicants, using their own social networks for initial contact. They could also effectively interpret the foster family care program to interested applicants.

Cox, R., and James, M. "Rescue from Limbo: Foster Home Placement for Hospitalized Disabled Children". Child Welfare, January 1970.

This article describes a pilot project to find foster homes for physically handicapped children. Foster parents were among this agency's pool of current and past foster homes. A questionnaire was sent out inquiring about foster parents' willingness to take a physically handicapped child. Those who responded positively to the questionnaire had all had previous contact with physically handicapped people, either personally or professionally.

Forsyth, M. "Self-Selection: A Project in Fostering Teens". OACAS Journal, November 1975.

The following recruitment techniques were found to be successful and were recommended:

- o inserts in church bulletins

- o flyers distributed to homes and stores
- o letters to ratepayers' associations

The most fruitful recruitment method was newspaper advertising.

Gaffney, Jane. "Are Foster Homes a Rare Resource?" Child Welfare, Vol. 44, 1965, p. 395.

This article reports on the recruitment methods of agencies recruiting for special service foster homes for black children, emotionally disturbed younger children or for adolescents. The following were found to be successful recruitment techniques:

- o Descriptive information sheets were given to clergy, board of education personnel, Boy Scout and Girl Guide leaders, settlement houses, and employees of two leading industries. Speaking engagements followed this initial contact.
- o Foster parent newsletters were used for recruitment notices.

Garber, M. "Neighbourhood Based Child Welfare". Child Welfare, February 1975.

This article discusses the recruitment of foster parents from low-income families. The following recruitment techniques were found to be successful:

- o setting up a neighbourhood recruitment office
- o a door-to-door neighbourhood survey.

Garrett, Beatrice, L. "A Crisis in Foster Care". Public Welfare, April, 1967.

Garrett sees a need to differentiate between temporary and extended foster care, and to appeal for foster parents on the basis of these. Garrett found that if recruitment is to be effective it must be realistically interpreted. A person-to-person neighbourhood recruitment campaign was found to be effective.

George, V. Foster Care. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970.

George reports on a study of foster parent recruitment by specialized recruitment workers. Relevant literature in this area is also reviewed.

This study finds that even when regular workers receive extra training related to the need for, and importance of foster parents, other job pressures continually supplant foster parent recruitment.

On the basis of this study and related literature, it is recommended that a specialized section of the child welfare department be established for the recruitment of all types of ancillary workers such as foster parents, visitors for elderly persons, home helpers, etc.

Also considered is the importance of maintaining positive community perceptions of fostering. Related to this is the manner in which foster parent applications are rejected. Of three departments surveyed, all rejected applicants through a brief letter which provided no explanation.

Jaffee, B., and Kline, D. New Payment Patterns and the Foster Parent Role. Child Welfare League of America, 1970.

An agency in Louisiana reports on a new program designed to find long-term foster parents for black youth. A plan was devised to recruit foster homes where the mother had been or was employed outside the home but was to terminate employment. They also recruited only those with no previous foster experience to ensure that they were recruiting outside of the usual foster parent pool.

Their criteria for selection were:

- o no previous foster experience
- o mother presently or previously employed
- o black
- o well-established home
- o stable marriage
- o age 30-56
- o father with stable employment
- o experience in child rearing.

Recruitment Methods

Public communication media were avoided in favour of interpretation of the program to selected church, social and professional groups by agency caseworkers. Four churches were selected which were characterized by black, mid-income, stable, home-owning families. In each case, the social worker spoke to the entire congregation and then to a smaller group of those taking the initiative to attend. The same process was followed with other groups. These approaches were seen to be advantageous because

- o they were face to face
- o the audience was partially pre-screened through the pre-selection methods described above
- o provision of full information about the program allowed for self-screening.

Foster mothers became employees of the agency and received a salary of \$200.00 per month, plus benefits.

Those selected stated that their motivation for involvement in the program was the opportunity to earn a salary while remaining in their own homes, engaged in child rearing.

Also reported on, was a special recruitment project undertaken by an agency in Seattle. Recruitment took the form of a social worker interpreting the program to friends, community agencies and organizations and key lay and professional persons in the community. All of those addressed were encouraged to refer persons who might provide suitable foster homes. Consequently, the needs and purposes of the agency were interpreted to prospective foster parents by school teachers, social workers, clergy, active foster parents, etc.

There were 163 applications received, and of these, 67 were accepted and in use, and 15 were awaiting evaluation. Of the remaining 81, 69 were closed because of rejection or withdrawal; 6 were closed after the visit of the child, and 6 others after placement.

Kadushin, Alfred. Child Welfare Services. New York: MacMillan & Co., 1967.

States that some of the most successful recruiting is done by foster parents. Existing foster parents can be effective speaking to local church and P.T.A. groups, etc., because they can convey a more realistic concept of foster care and can answer questions about being a foster parent. They become, in effect, ambassadors of the agency and are reinforced by visible enhancement of the status of foster parents.

Kadushin has also found that continuous rather than intense sporadic recruitment campaigns are most effective.

One study, reported in this book, determined that only 15% of all applicants ultimately agree to become foster parents.

Michela, M. Ann. "Community Centred Foster Family Care". Children, Vol. 13(1), 1966.

Report of a local community children's shelter in New York City which began recruiting its own foster homes as a result of conventional agencies' inability to recruit homes.

Recruitment methods consisted of an appeal to employees to recruit from their own social networks. This agency's other major source of foster parents was people living in large public housing projects. Recruitment of these persons was assisted by the local housing authority and the city welfare department.

In two years this agency was able to place 110 children and had an additional 80 foster homes awaiting children.

O'Regan, G. "Foster Family Care for Children with Mental Retardation". Children Today, January/February, 1974.

An agency in the United States has begun recruiting parents of mentally retarded children to foster other retarded children. This has come about as a result of recognition that there are many parents who simply do not have the resources to care for a handicapped child. For these children, resources other than institutions must be found, and traditional foster care agencies have not been very successful in placing mentally handicapped children.

Parents who have decided to keep their mentally handicapped child and are adjusting well are a likely resource as foster parents for other handicapped children. Such parents will have learned new skills and will to a large extent be tied down with parenting responsibilities anyway. The advantages of this program were seen as:

- o providing companionship for the handicapped children
- o removing the strain from non-handicapped siblings to be a companion to a handicapped brother or sister
- o parents/mothers of handicapped children were usually tied down, with no income; foster mothers generally felt no more tied down with two children and were provided some extra income
- o the foster program provides a significant alternative to institutions.

Recruitment can take place through contact with P.T.A.s of schools for handicapped children, and with parent groups, social agencies, etc.

It was found that the families most likely to be acceptable were those with a moderately or mildly handicapped child and well adjusted parents who were aware of potential problems.

Stone, Helen. Reflections on Foster Care. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1969.

Reports on an inter-agency survey of recruitment methods which showed overwhelming support for recruitment via existing foster parents. The survey found that this is seen as the single most effective method of recruitment.

Vasaly, D.M. Foster Care in Five States. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976.

The author reports the results of a number of studies on foster care in five states. In California, it was found that 72% of the prospective foster parents applying to an agency became involved through either a personal experience or a friend.

SELECTION

Kraus, Jonathan. "Predicting Success of Foster Placements for School-Age Children". Social Work, Vol. 16(1), January 1971.

This Australian study of 157 school-age children in their first foster homes (without siblings) attempted to relate selected characteristics of these children and the foster parents to placement outcome. Success was defined solely as survival of the placement for a minimum of two years, regardless of the subjective judgement of the social worker.

Kraus finds that outcome does not depend on matching age, sex, or intelligence of the child to the request by the foster parents. However, the motivation of "company" for their own child is negatively associated with success.

A number of characteristics are positively associated with success, but no one of these can be used to predict success; rather, the interaction of a number of them is essential. These factors are:

- o foster mother is age 46 or older
- o the total number of people in the home is other than four
- o foster parents have two natural children
- o another foster child is already in the home
- o motivation of foster parents is "generally interested" or "know child".

Kraus concludes that selection of foster homes, using prediction tables to screen out those with low probability of success, would at least help to eliminate the frequent moves which are so damaging to children.

PLACEMENT DECISIONS

Child Welfare League of America. Quantitative Approaches to Parent Selection. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1962.

This article reports on the use of a foster parent attitude test which was used as an aid to matching foster parents and children who will be compatible. It is suggested that such compatibility is a more important determinant of placement success, than is foster parent maturity, etc.

Committee on the Office of the Attorney General. Legal Issues in Foster Care. Raleigh, N.C.: U.S. National Association of Attorneys General, 1976.

Reference is made to issues relating to the removal of the foster child from the foster parent. The general provision is that foster parents are entitled to "a reasonable period of notice" of agency intent to remove the child.

Reference is also made to the specific regulations of various individual states.

Cox, R., and James, M. "Rescue from Limbo: Foster Home Placement for Hospitalized Disabled Children". Child Welfare, January 1970.

The difficulties of placement of physically disabled children are discussed. The author emphasizes that factors other than the usual must be considered. For example, in this study, children required nearby schools which were accessible, and emphasis was placed on their placement in regular school classes.

In this study, a pre-placement visit was used so that foster parents could experience, prior to placement, the difficulties caused by the handicap. The child and prospective foster parents became acquainted even prior to pre-placement visits, through foster parent visiting while the child was still in the hospital.

Forsyth, Mary. "Self Selection: A Project in Fostering Teens". OACAS Journal, November 1975.

This article reported on a project of the Scarborough Branch of the Metropolitan Toronto CAS for a self-selection approach in recruiting foster parents and in matching them with teenaged foster children.

The following process was used:

- o potential foster parents attended several meetings with staff and experienced foster parents before making their decision about fostering
- o the teenagers needing homes were described to those parents wishing to foster
- o the foster parents provided a self-description for the child they thought they would like to foster
- o if the child agreed, visits were exchanged
- o on the basis of a mutual decision to live together, a three-month agreement stating mutual expectations was drawn up and the child was placed.

The project's objective of placing a specific number of children was met although only half the placements lasted the hoped-for six months. The length of placement increased with the foster parents' second or third child, but even a short placement was often a maturing experience for the teenager. Weekly group meetings were found to help sustain placements and specialized, skilled workers were considered to be more effective than generalists.

George, V. Foster Care. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1970.

George suggests that the matching of a child to a foster home is best accomplished through a series of introductory meetings, where both parties have an opportunity to "see for themselves" and that when possible a placement decision should not be made without the agreement of both parties.

George's survey determined that pre-placement visits were only readily used with children over twelve. However, several studies argue that the emotional/psychological health of infants might be bettered if they were introduced to new faces and styles of care, while still in their familiar environment. Thus, the author concludes that there may be rationale for the use of pre-placement visits no matter what the age of the child.

Jaffee, B., and Kline, D. New Payment Patterns and the Foster Parent Role. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1970.

Jaffee and Kline report on a long-term foster care pilot project in Seattle. Prospective foster parents are given complete information on the child (after completion of the selection process) including physical, psychological and intellectual status as the basis for mutual consideration of the suitability of a particular child.

With children over nine years, the agency uses a trial placement period of one month. Both the child and foster parents are aware of the trial period. If the child must be removed during this period both the child and the foster parents are less likely to view the experience as a failure.

Katz, Sanford. "The Changing Legal Status of Foster Parents". Children Today, November/December 1976.

Katz discusses issues related to the removal of the foster child from the foster parents. Several court cases in which foster parents have contested the removal of their foster child are also discussed.

In New York, the Organization of Foster Families for Equality and Reform (OFFER) waged a successful class action suit on the grounds that removal was unconstitutional because a hearing was not provided prior to removal of the child. As a result of the suit, the right to a hearing prior to removal was given to the child not to the foster parents although all interested parties have the right to present evidence.

A case in California found that foster parents are "de facto parents" and have the right to contest the removal of the child.

ROLE AND STATUS

American Public Welfare Association. Standards for Foster Family Services Systems With Guidelines for Implementation Specifically Related to Public Agencies. A.P.W.A., 1975.

It is suggested that foster parent association representatives be included in the agency policy-setting process. This could be accomplished through their inclusion in program and budgetary presentations to boards, etc.

The A.P.W.A. also suggests that foster parents be involved in reviews of foster homes (not necessarily their own).

Child Welfare League of America. Standards for Foster Family Service. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1975.

The C.W.L.A. recommends that the person having the legal custody of a child be the guardian. Thus, the guardian of the child should be a relative, friend or foster parent.

Forsyth, Mary. "A Partnership Agreement for Foster Parents and CAS". OACAS Journal, December 1975.

This article describes a small pilot project of the Scarborough Branch of the Metropolitan Toronto CAS. The project grew out of the growing awareness in the early 70s of the gulf between foster parents and the foster agencies. Clearer role definitions for both workers and foster parents as partners in fostering were being recommended and this project was set up to enable staff and foster parents to use and evaluate a written partnership agreement.

The project did not meet with the expected enthusiastic response, but did provide tangible recognition that some role problems could be eased by a partnership approach involving shared homestudies, ongoing service reviews by foster parents as well as social workers, a list of mutual expectations, foster parents being involved in planning decisions for their foster child, and foster parents receiving "all staff" memos.

Foster Care Committee. Report on Child Foster Care. Edmonton, Alberta: Queen's Printer, Province of Alberta, 1972.

With respect to foster parent decision-making authority, this committee recommended that:

- o foster parents be given the right to make decisions for their children with regard to hospitalization, except in exceptional cases
- o foster parent decision-making authority be extended so that it resembles that of natural parents' rights to decide on holidays, etc.

George, V. Foster Care. London: Routledge and Kegan, Paulm 1970.

George reports on a study of foster parent/child care officer perceptions of the foster parent role. The findings of the study are as follows:

- o that discussion groups for foster parents are the most effective means of teaching and clarifying foster parent roles
- o that these groups strengthened the foster parents' identification with the goals of the agency
- o that foster parents found this method of role learning more acceptable than training sessions (although the majority were still against any kind of training/support meetings)
- o that change of foster parent to foster care worker would help to eliminate the present role confusion.

Holman, R. "The Place of Fostering in Social Work". The British Journal of Social Work, Spring 1975.

Holman reviews the findings of foster care studies. He finds that research findings support his belief that foster parents do not want to become agency employees, but that they do feel that present foster care rates are too low. One study recommends that foster parents should have greater legal rights.

Holman also discusses the Adoption and Guardianship Reform Organization (A.G.R.O.) which is a British foster parent pressure group pushing for greater legal rights for foster parents.

Another suggestion stemming from this article is for a legal tripartite guardianship among foster parents, the local authority, and the natural parents. In this case, custody would be decided by any two in agreement, with provision for appeal to a juvenile court.

Madison, B., and Shapiro, M. "Permanent and Long-Term Foster Family Care". Child Welfare, March 1970.

This article recommends the transference of guardianship to long-term foster parents. However, in several states where this has been attempted, it has then been found to be difficult to make board payments to the foster guardian out of public funds.

Dual guardianship is also suggested in cases where an agency is the guardian of a child. A community person (possibly the foster parents, though not necessarily) would also enter into guardianship to protect the child's interests, safeguard rights and inform the community of the need for foster or adoptive parents.

Pers, Jessica. Government As Parent: Administering Foster Care in California. Berkeley: University of California, Institute of Government Studies, 1976.

Pers reports on research which shows that foster guardianship can provide a child with a feeling of stability and permanence without change to the foster care arrangement, and can give foster parents a needed sense of responsibility. In spite of these findings, department officials in California do not encourage foster parents to become guardians as they feel it may give foster parents a false sense of responsibility and independence.

Pratt, Catherine. "Foster Parents as Agency Employees". Children, Vol. 13(1), 1966, p. 14.

The article reports on a demonstration project in Washington, D.C. which hired six foster mothers as agency employees. Three of these foster mothers and their husbands live in their own homes. The other three foster mothers and their husbands live in homes rented, furnished and maintained by the agency. Five of the six families each care for five children; the sixth family has four children. One family has two natural children.

These foster mothers are paid a salary, regular employee benefits including vacations, sick leave, workmen's compensation, and are eligible to join retirement and hospitalization plans. They are also fully reimbursed for the costs of child care.

Pratt, Catherine. "Assembled Families". Child Welfare, Vol. 46, 1967, pp. 94-99.

This article discusses a program in which employee foster mothers are recruited. Eleven foster homes were created through employment of the mother. A total of fifty-four children have been placed in the homes. The agency has provided for annual home evaluations, and it is on the basis of these that annual salary increments are determined. The children placed require long-term care, and foster mothers express some role confusion. They attend staff meetings, call the caseworker their boss but state that they feel more like parents than employees. The author concludes that, despite these conflicts, the two roles appear to be compatible.

Rose, C. Some Emerging Issues in Legal Liability of Children's Agencies. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1978.

Rose reports on some of the legal attempts to give foster parents more authority. In Pennsylvania, the Juvenile Act gives the foster parents the right to contest the removal of the child. California recognizes the limited (de facto) parental rights of foster parents (largely procedural rights).

Rosenblum, B. Foster Homes and Adolescents: A Research Report. Hamilton, Ontario: Hamilton-Wentworth Children's Aid Society, 1977.

Three-tenths or just under a third of the foster parents involved in this study felt that foster parenting should be considered a profession. Rosenblum also reports that a number of foster parents complained about not having enough authority over the child(ren) in their care.

Rosenblum noted that the affection is greater between the foster parent and the child than between the social worker and the child. On the basis of this, she questions whether this affection would be less if the caretaker were to become a paid employee.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Jaffee, B., and Kline, D. New Payment Patterns and the Foster Parent Role. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1970.

Jaffe and Kline present a study of a special project in Seattle to find long-term foster parents.

Social work staff involved in the project were required to have a Master of Social Work degree and three years of related social work experience. Each worker had a caseload of twenty children.

Maluccio, A. "Foster Family Care Revisited: Problems and Prospects". Public Welfare, Spring 1973.

Maluccio concludes that social workers could deal more effectively with foster parents if they could use a multi-method approach rather than a straight caseload approach.

Mannheimer, Joan. "A Demonstration: Foster Parents in the Caseworker Role". Child Welfare, February 1969.

The article discusses the importance of encouraging the development of social networks between foster parents. Mannheimer describes the following advantages of the social network:

- o acts as a communication network
- o can provide for reciprocal care
- o provides for information-sharing
- o can provide for transportation-sharing
- o foster parents can assume an appropriate planning role
- o strengthens ties with the agency.

With regard to contact between foster and natural parents, Mannheimer recommends that:

- o provision for continued contact (if appropriate) should be built in at the time of placement
- o natural parents should visit the foster parent home prior to the placement of the child

- o the social worker should assist in the planning of visits
- o if visits cannot be handled productively in the home, office visits should be arranged.

Vasaly, D.M. Foster Care in Five States. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976.

As a result of the studies recorded here, it was found that social workers in the child care field required more training in the areas of case recording techniques, long and short-term planning, and development of individual objectives.

COMPENSATION

Child Welfare League of America. Standards for Foster Family Service. New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1975.

The Child Welfare League recommends that maintenance costs include a prorated share of food, clothing, housing, utilities, telephone, replacement of household items, cleaning, laundry, personal medical supplies, liability insurance, and family recreational/educational activities. Review should take place on the basis of cost of living guidelines.

Special foster parent rates should include payment for all of the above as well as continuity of service, provision of housekeeping, other support services and paid vacation.

Culley, James, D. "Public Payments for Foster Care". Social Work, Vol. 22(3), 1977.

Reports on United States basic compensation rates which take into account the age of the child, the physical and mental needs of the child and whether the setting is urban or rural. These rates are intended to cover a prorated share of the costs of food, room, recreation and personal expenses.

Additional payments include liability insurance in 12% of the states.

DeJong Gerben. "Setting Foster Care Rates". Public Welfare, Fall 1975.

The author recommends the use of U.S. Department of Labour's Bureau of Labour Statistics as a base for determining compensation rates. These BLS figures estimate the income needed to maintain urban families of four at a lower, moderate and higher standard of living.

Even with the use of these figures for determining foster care rates, several problems have been identified:

- o At what standard of living should a child or adult in family care be living?
- o How should discretionary spending rates be determined?

Foster parents in Michigan were able to argue successfully that Bureau of Labour Statistics should be applied at the same standard of living as that of the foster parents.

Foster Care Committee. Report on Child Foster Care. Edmonton, Alberta: Queen's Printer, Province of Alberta, 1972.

At the time of this study, the Province was terminating support payments to foster parents whenever the child temporarily left the home, e.g., for hospitalization. This committee then recommended that payments be maintained as the fostering role would ideally continue even when the child was out of the house. This is also the period when foster parents might be incurring greater expenses in going to visit the child.

Peterson, Virginia. "Payment for Foster Parents: A Cost Benefit Approach". Social Work, July 1974.

Peterson discusses a system for determination of compensation rates. An agency, in deciding how to rationalize costs to foster parents in addition to maintenance payments, considered both the fee-for-service and employee models. The agency chose the fee-for-service approach with the fee determined by one or more of three categories. These are: child, need or problem, and service provided by foster parent. The child category includes handicapped or diabetic children, children from institutions, etc., and children with handicaps or conditions which are primarily psychological rather than behavioural. The problem category includes children who have problems such as bed-wetting, drug use, truancy, etc. The service category is determined by what the foster parent actually must do in order to meet the needs of the child.

A schedule of maximums in each category establishes the highest rates. Two or all three of the categories might be combined, with a weighting formula assigned to each.

Peterson also describes another method developed for arriving at the rate of compensation. In this case, rates are determined on the basis of an agreement between the caseworker and foster parents which sets out identified objectives for the child which are to be achieved through services provided by the foster parent. This rate is influenced by three variables: direct cost, time, and skill level.

Rosenblum, B. Foster Homes and Adolescents: A Research Report. Hamilton, Ontario: Hamilton Wentworth Children's Aid Society, 1977.

Presents the findings from a three year research project which took place at the Hamilton Wentworth Children's Aid Society and the Children's Aid Society of the Regional Municipality of Halton.

In this research project special incentive rates were offered for foster homes which accepted additional teenage foster children. The results were inconclusive.

Shah, C. "Assessing Needs and Board Rates for Handicapped Children in Foster Family Care". Child Welfare, December 1971.

The author discusses a system for determining eligibility for special rates.

Five types of care are defined:

- o therapeutic emotional care
- o personal care
- o therapeutic physical care
- o ancillary care
- o supervision of medical care

Each of these five types of care is then further divided into three levels: normal care, above average care, and intensive care.

Each type of care and the corresponding levels are well defined and operationalized. The author suggests that a dollar value could be applied to each level/each type of care. Although some subjectivity would still be implied in the setting of these dollar values, the author feels that use of this system would help to ensure greater equity in the provision of special rates.

Vasaly, D.M. Foster Care in Five States. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976.

Vasaly reports that rates paid to foster parents caring for a child to whom they are related are consistently lower, usually about one half of the average rate. This serves as a disincentive to a child being cared for within his/her own family network.

LIABILITY FOR DAMAGE

Committee on the Office of the Attorney General. Legal Issues in Foster Care. Raleigh, N.C.: U.S. National Association of Attorneys General, 1976.

This Committee reports that the long-standing rule in tort law, that children may not sue a parent for negligent injury, does not apply to foster parents. In Goller v. White a Wisconsin court found that a foster parent was not immune as would be a natural parent, and the foster child was able to sue for negligent injury.

Foster Care Committee. Report on Child Foster Care. Edmonton, Alberta: Queen's Printer, Province of Alberta, 1972.

The findings of a study of Alberta's Foster Care Program are presented in this report. At the time of this report, foster parents were liable for damage by foster children and the Province did not provide insurance coverage. The following was recommended:

That insurance coverage be provided to foster parents as a protection against third party claims, and that reimbursement be made to foster parents incurring financial loss as the result of the wrongful acts of the foster child when such loss is unusually serious and clearly definable.

Garrett, Beatrice. "The Rights of Foster Parents". Children Vol. 17(3), June 1970.

This article recommends that the agency be responsible for providing coverage for liability for damage by wards to all foster parents. Garrett suggests that this is consistent with the new perspective of foster parents as colleagues.

RETENTION

Boyd, L.H., Jr., and Remy, L.L. "Is Foster Parent Training Worthwhile?" Social Service Review, June 1978, pp. 275-296.

Reports on a two-year follow up evaluation of a training program in the San Francisco Bay area to see whether such programs are an effective way of avoiding turnover of foster homes once they have been licensed. The study analyzes 267 placements in both trained and untrained homes for both long and short-term placements, and attempts to sort out what effects on placement outcomes could be directly attributed to the training program rather than to characteristics of the foster parents or foster children. The study looks at the effects of training on a) the disposition of the case; b) the length of placement; c) the foster parents' rating of the placement; and d) their decision to retain or drop their licenses.

Analysis of the data for all groups shows that foster parent training has an impact on placement outcomes, independent of other factors such as foster parent experience, environmental stress, and the characteristics of the foster children. The impact was strongest for those outcome factors most under foster parents' control, namely, ratings and licensing. The authors discuss the additional, independent effects of training; and the implications of the study for universal training of foster parents, matching children (including "high risk" children), and program costs.

Committee of the Office of the Attorney General. Legal Issues in Foster Care. Raleigh, N.C.: U.S. National Association of Attorneys General, 1976.

Issues related to the use of contracts with foster parents are discussed in this report.

Most current contracts very clearly give the agency ultimate and absolute control of the child. Any such contracts are binding. However, because such a contract concerns the life of a child rather than goods and services, it is not so absolute.

In a case where foster parents appealed a removal decision to the court, in Stapleton v. Dauphin County Child Care Service, the court cited legislation concerning contracts which stated that a "Placement Record" is voidable by the courts when the best interests of the child conflict with it.

Lawsuits frequently ensue when an agency tries to remove a foster child of long standing. Agencies frequently use the defense that the family has no standing to contest removal. Most courts reject this in the name of equity and due process.

Dinnage, R., and Pringle, M.L. Foster Home Care Facts and Fallacies. New York: Humanities Press, 1967.

Report of a study done to determine retention factors of eighty-six unsuccessful (placement breakdown) and eighty-one successful (as judged by two or more assessors) placements. A significant correlation was found between failure in the second foster home and two or more years of institutional care during the child's first five years.

When the foster parents had a child of their own who was the same age and sex as the foster child, the placement breakdown factor was 87%.

The other major factor in placement breakdown was foster parents' unrealistic expectations of the child. It was recommended that foster parent motives be the focal point of pre-placement investigation.

Festinger, Trudy. "Placement Agreements with Boarding Homes: A Survey". Child Welfare, December 1974.

Reports on a survey of all fifty states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico concerning the use of placement agreements. Eight states did not respond. Two of those responding did not use such an agreement. The following problems were identified with regard to the content of these contracts:

- o the stress is on physical caretaking rather than on emotional nurturance
- o contact between natural and foster parents, when addressed at all, is addressed negatively
- o contracts are expressly negative about foster parents moving to adoptive or guardianship roles, when this should be encouraged
- o the content and tone of some of the agreements convey the attitude of working with a client.

Garrett, Beatrice. "A Crisis in Foster Care". Public Welfare, April 1967.

Garrett found the following factors to have a significant, negative effect on the retention of foster parents:

- o the mobility of foster parents (often related to career)
- o the need for mothers to work
- o the lack of casework help and support
- o the lack of a clear role definition
- o the lack of training and orientation provided by the agency
- o the foster parents' lack of employee status.

The following solutions are suggested:

- o agency reimbursement for housing costs or agency owned or rented housing
- o clearly stated salary and fringe benefits
- o paid vacation, sick leave and relief help
- o full reimbursement for all child care costs.

Jaffe, B. and Kline, D. New Payment Patterns and the Foster Parent Role. Child Welfare League of America, 1970.

A study of the retention rate of a special pilot project in Louisiana to place black youth in long term foster homes.

Project placed fourteen children with eight foster mothers who became employees of the agency. Five of these children were seen as very high risk, five as moderately high risk, four as O.K. At the end of one year all of the homes had been retained.

A retention rate study was also done for a similar program in Seattle. After two years it was concluded that the rate of retention was very high. Sixty-seven foster homes participated in this pilot project and, during the two year period, only one child was removed during a one month trial placement period.

The following reasons were identified as contributing to the high retention rate:

- o The agency has a clearly visible value system and identity, and foster parents who have similar values are attracted.

- o Foster parents are paid a \$100/month service fee, plus board and room, an open ended clothing allowance and complete reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses. (This is not seen as a motivating factor but encourages retention.)

Jones, Evan. "A Study of Those Who Cease to Foster". The British Journal of Social Work, Spring 1975.

This article reports a correlation between the age at recruitment and the length of fostering. Mothers aged thirty and over foster longer. Working class people also tend to foster longer.

Jones divides the reasons for not continuing fostering into external and internal.

External Reasons

These included such things as changes in own family circumstances. These accounted for about one quarter of the homes being withdrawn.

Internal Reasons

These included such things as insufficient agency support, or unhappiness from the beginning with the child placed with them. Over half of those withdrawing did so for internal reasons.

A relationship was found between reasons for beginning and ceasing to foster. Those who began because of their own families' needs, ceased because of the needs of their own family.

Michela, M. Ann. "Community Centred Foster Family Care". Children, Vol. 13(1), 1966.

This article reports on a New York City agency which places children in foster homes primarily recruited from large nearby public housing projects.

The agency postulated that if foster parents have had previous contact and feel comfortable with the agency, then they are more likely to seek it out when they are in need of assistance. To this end, the agency provided ongoing training sessions for foster mothers in the neighbourhood. It also provided a recreation program for the children of foster parents (natural children but presumably foster children could also attend). This was done to make natural children feel positive about contact with the agency and to help them overcome feelings of jealousy and resentment of the foster child.

The agency has become a sort of neighbourhood centre to which all members of a foster family may go for visits, meetings, etc.

Murphy, H. "Foster Home Variables and Adult Outcomes". Mental Hygiene, Vol. 48, pp. 587-599.

Reports on a study done in Montreal with 316 children in foster placements. The variable found to be most strongly associated

with placement outcome was residential location. Both "good" and "poor" risk children did better in city or rural homes than in suburban homes. Geographical factors overrode any other variables associated with suburban living such as occupation or income.

Murphy relates the above findings to the general lack of community solidarity and security found in the suburbs. He also attributes it to value differences between the child and the home.

The study also found that boys and girls and "good" and "poor" risk children need and respond to different types of homes. "Poor" risk children need a home where conditions are limited and the level of expectation is low.

Otter, Marina den, and Graham, J. "Foster Home Retention". OACAS, October 1975.

This article identifies motivation as being the key to foster parent retention and recommends that foster parents should have more say in decisions which affect the children in their care.

Foster parents should have more contact with social workers and should be made to feel free to make demands. They should be also provided with a list of the support services available to them.

Parker, R.A. Decision in Child Care, A Study of Prediction in Fostering. London: Allen and Unwin, 1966.

Reports on a five year study of 209 placements of children 13 years and under. This study confirmed previous findings that the success of the placement was closely related to the age of the child. The younger the child the more likely the placement was to be successful. The length of time spent in an institution was also found to negatively affect placement.

The presence of the foster parents' own children, especially when younger or of the same age, was found to negatively affect placement.

Parker recommends that the foster parent role be professionalized and that they receive higher payment.

Poulos, Susan. Foster Care Study: Factors Associated With Placement Stability. Vancouver: Children's Aid Society of Vancouver, 1972.

Poulos studied the retention factors of 165 foster homes. It was determined that the most important factors in placement success were the age and emotional health of the child and the role orientation of the foster father. Social workers identified the fact that foster parents perceive their role in one of two ways:

- o as a role similar to that of the adoptive parent, consequently requiring little contact with the social worker or natural parents;
- o as a "professional" with a consequent desire to enhance the relationship with the natural parents and collaborate with the social worker. Placement success favoured the professional orientation.

In predicting the success of foster placements during their first six months, a full two thirds of the outcomes could be accounted for on the basis of two child characteristics and one foster father variable.

The findings suggest that the influence exerted by the foster father who prefers the natural parent role is a negative one. This foster father is usually reluctant to accept the important (and often highly charged) relationship between the child and natural family, and is also likely to ignore the importance of a consistent, continuous relationship with the worker who serves as a bridge between the two families. The foster mother's feelings may concur with her husband's but have less impact as she would have intermittent if not frequent contact with the social worker.

Poulos concludes that there is a need to pull foster fathers into an active partnership with the agency throughout the entire fostering process.

Rosenblum, B. Foster Homes and Adolescents: A Research Report. Hamilton, Ontario: Hamilton-Wentworth Children's Aid Society, 1977.

It was found that when foster parents know each other, they terminate for more "appropriate" (objective?) reasons. Rosenblum also found that a constructive one-to-one relationship between the foster parents and the social worker was an important incentive to continue in the foster care program.

The three most frequent reasons for termination were:

- o the foster mother going to work
- o a problem with a specific child
- o a problem with the agency.

Vasaly, D.M. *Foster Care in Five States*. Washington: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976.

All of the states had a poor rate of retention of foster homes. This was attributed to:

- o lack of provision for foster parent vacations
- o inadequate agency support services
- o overworking of good homes.

The Vermont study recommended the use of Regional Citizen's Advisory Councils which would:

- o improve accountability to the community
- o enhance community awareness of the needs of children
- o advocate for community support.

Vick, John E. "Recruiting and Retraining Foster Homes". Public Welfare, July 1967.

This article identifies the following reasons for the loss of foster homes:

- o Women are working outside the home.
- o Foster parents are not paid enough.
- o The children currently in need of foster care are more difficult to cope with than in the past.
- o Foster parents become discouraged over their inability to cope with difficult children.
- o Support services are insufficient and inappropriate.
- o Board payments are low.
- o There are problems in the foster parents' family.

Wiltse, K. "Decision Making Needs in Foster Care". Children Today, November/December 1976.

Wiltse found that legal guardianship and formal written agreements, as used by some Child Welfare agencies, promote the stability and continuity of foster parents.

Responding to this Paper

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